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marpa house news

BUDDHIST MEDITATION AND RETREAT CENTRE

Winter 2018-19



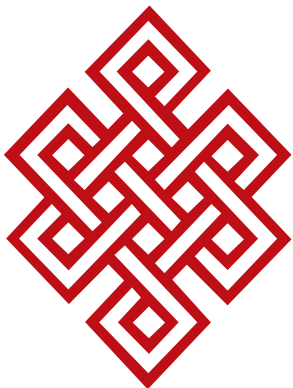
The Breeze of Delight

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BUDDHIST
MEDITATION AND
RETREAT CENTRE



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Trustee News

by Louise Kuka (Chair of the Trustees)

My last few reports have always been after a large event or big project so it's been obvious what to write about. On this occasion, reflecting over the last 6 months, I realised just how busy it has been in a very different way.



The summer saw us say goodbye and thank you to Gail Oliver and welcome Anne-Maria as our new Secretary. We opened our Summer Tea Party to the village and about a dozen villagers came and joined the joyful occasion alongside the sangha. We were delighted to welcome Traleg Khandro again, whose teachings on Mahamudra inspired everyone present. We are pleased to say she is returning next year. This autumn we had the pleasure of Lama Samten visiting, as well as two wonderful weekend teachings, his presence in the House is great for the staff and visitors alike. In amongst this we've had a wealth of weekend and day teachings by Lama Klaus, White Sangha members, and a family weekend where I know the children were very excited to be back at Marpa House!

By the time you are reading this, Vicki Tofts will have completed her 3 years on Committee. She has been truly dedicated giving so much time and support, in what has been an exceptional few years, so many thanks to you Vicki.

We have also decided to increase the fees/charges. The last time we did this was over 4 years ago. We make a policy of keeping the fees as low as possible to make it affordable for all, but as you all know costs are increasing, and Marpa House is a big house to run and maintain, so our fees will go up on 1st February 2019, full details can be found on the back page.

I like to finish by thanking those involved in hosting Rinpoche's teachings both in Swansea and most recently, Cornwall. They were bittersweet moments, joyful to listen to our precious Lama's teachings, whilst sad as there was a knowing that these were probably



the last teachings for a while as Rinpoche goes into retreat, and his sabbatical from his Centres begins.

We have had so much guidance from Rinpoche as well as teachings, transmissions and blessings, I could go on and on. Rinpoche has taught us to grow up, to take responsibility to continue his teachings, and I see this flourishing in those around me. The White Sangha has grown, - and people are emerging bringing their experience and sharing the teachings that they've inherited from Rinpoche. This will shine through in the coming 6 months, and, I'm sure, continue to shine brighter over the coming years. The last time I saw Rinpoche I mentioned to him 'you have been teaching us to grow up, and now that you are going in retreat we must grow up'. His response was 'yes, but you must help each other'. I often see this amongst the Marpa House Sangha. It is such a wonderfully supportive family, where there is genuine care and thoughtfulness for each other. This is compassion in action, - and I feel such a privilege and a joy to be a part of this large family of Dharma brothers and sisters.

It's truly inspiring to see what can flourish and blossom from all the years of compassion that Rinpoche has showered on us. I hope that we continue to flourish and grow, and to carry Rinpoche's legacy long into the future, and to fulfil his wishes.

Yours in the Dharma.



Committee News

by Vicki Tofts (Chair of the Committee)

Another six months have passed and another winter is upon us: a gentle reminder of the impermanence of things. I have come to the end of my time on the Committee. It has been the most incredible experience, working alongside fellow Sangha members and meeting in the beauty of Marpa House. There have been some wonderful events and incredible teachers - such precious memories and opportunities.



I would personally like to thank past and current Committee members for all of their dedication and for being such an inspiration, and the Trustees for their hard work and devotion to Rinpoche and the Lineage.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank the following people (in no particular order) for their help in supporting the House over the last six months: Jamie Pinto, Marlis Scholz, Cherry Cooke, Dominique Simpson, Ben Smithies, Ven. Tenzin, Iris Treibl, Brian Richardson, Jaki Deere, Daniel Bradley, Donald Reilly, Jigme Deere and Ed Bridgeman – phew!

A huge thank you to our staff Anne-Maria Bojko and Gabrielle McCarthy for being so amazing and working so hard and taking such good care of Marpa House.

Being a committee member is a very rewarding experience. There are new skills to be learnt, new friends to be made, not to mention helping to keep Marpa House going for future generations to enjoy! So, if you have some free time or are looking to give something back to the community, please get in contact – we'd love to hear from you. Have a warm, healthy winter, and enjoy reflecting on things past and things yet to come (all whilst remaining in the present moment!).





The Breeze of Delight

by David Philbedge

In discussing windhorse, you may see connections with Buddhism, but I would invite you to explore, without jargon, rather than trying to pin things down as this or that. By allowing some space, this can give an additional bearing, pointing to what can't really be pinned down by words. It's more of an *oh* journey, rather than an *a-ha* one.

Windhorse, in Tibetan, is *lungta*, nowadays, commonly used to mean good luck. *Baraka*, in Arabic, appears to be quite similar; in terms of both original meaning, and current usage. In fact, if we were to look at many cultures around the world, we would find likewise – that which was once meaningful, now becoming superstition, or empty gestures, which is a shame but, fortunately, luckily, it is still possible to reconnect with what has become obscured, because the world, as it is, is still here, if we are willing to look, to be touched by it.

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Windhorse, often called the breeze of delight, sounds, well, delightful and magical! Yet, it is very much about ordinariness, discovering what there is to appreciate about that, and the methods recommended for experiencing *lungta* or windhorse are, likewise, rather ordinary, perhaps obvious, yet easy to overlook.

The bad news is that there is no quick fix or hocus-pocus to do this, but the good news is that it can be nurtured, specifically, by bringing our gentle attention to the detail of some ordinary part of our lives, perhaps cleaning or cooking, with a feeling of loving care. This isn't at all about ambition, being obsessive or trying to control our lives, that would be too speedy and aggressive.

The other vital aspect is touching the natural world in a simple but elemental way. That is maybe why people find gardening, even caring for a window box, so helpful. Again, the approach is gentle, rather than ambition to become an expert. It is a challenge if we live in

a city, but still opportunities, small ones, day-to-day, to simply experience a moment of the phenomenal world. If not many moments of silence, there are always lulls – we could see if we might hear; what is quiet, what is overlooked – just give it a go!

We might also make expeditions. I used to visit the coast, to feel the wind (and the rain!), on my face, to listen to the waves crashing down on a shingle beach. There are those moments, that catch our eye, touch our hearts – *oh* – before the *aha*, when we reach for a camera, or turn to someone next to us (or in our head!) to comment.

Regarding the natural world, I'm not suggesting that we should romanticise what is, essentially, wild. Tuning in to it doesn't mean that we couldn't get swept away by a flood, or squished by a fall of rocks. It's not about attempting to domesticate, although we might discover that we could feel at home in it, at the same time.

In this way, appreciation, inquisitiveness and warmth arise, quite naturally, rather like, with the friendly approach in *shamatha-vipashyana* meditation – also, heartily, recommended. In a sense, moments of connection and appreciation are accidental, and meditation makes us accident prone!

From this, a subtle, but important, shift in perspective also arises, a different outlook or view, in an immediate, embodied sense, rather than that arising from philosophical argument. Questions might arise, such as, are we inviting *lungta* or; are we being invited? Is it outside or is it me? No need to jump the gun, or grasp at a conclusion, again, it's more *oh*, then *aha*...

At some point, we might rediscover that quality of aliveness, a vital, living, energy in the world and actually begin to appreciate our existence as a human being, with our feet on the Earth and the sky above – a feeling of upliftedness and dignity, along with the courage for this journey, greater



gentleness, natural inquisitiveness, and many opportunities for humour, along the way.

Sometimes, a big wave comes...

We might feel as though we have become accomplished sailors, using the wind to navigate the seven seas of our lives, but then, something happens, or many things happen, all at once, as though we've been ambushed. We might find ourselves, as I have, washed up, on the shores of The Antitheses, a place where everything appears to be the opposite of what we would wish it to be.



It's too easy to get drawn into struggle, sometimes fighting for survival, sometimes feeling besieged. Getting caught up with the aggression, can feel impossible to avoid. Sadly, that can become a fortress, which wards off windhorse. It also makes us susceptible to all kinds of overthinking. Superstitious thinking and airy-fairy wishful thinking are both easy to get lost in but, at best, distract us from even noticing ordinary magic, at worst, cut us off from it. It's far too easy to brew up a toxic curse for ourselves, yet without substance, no life whatsoever, unless we feed it, building up resentment or a grudge against our life. Feeding problems with our aggression makes us susceptible to picking up all kinds of psychological and physical bugs.

However, we can always make a fresh start, relating to some part of our lives in a simple, gentle way, reconnecting with the basic healthiness of windhorse, loosening the grip

of aggression and siege mentality. Beginning to appreciate and regain perspective, equips us to deal with challenges.

The magical practices for rousing windhorse, on the spot, are simply reminders, when pulled off balance, to reconnect. Yet, a spark only blazes if we have gathered and dried the tinder already. They certainly do work, and can feel profoundly magical, extraordinary, but in an ordinary, rather than a hocus-pocus way.

Tibetans, reaching a mountain pass (or raising lungta prayer flags), shout:

Ki ki so so lha gyal!

It's a proclamation of victory, over all aspects of aggression – victory over war, a reminder and celebration of the beautiful view – *oh* – sacred outlook, perspective, rather than an achievement. Whether we actually feel it, is largely dependent on the ground work (and if we are looking in the right direction!). We can't fake it with hocus-pocus.

Prayer flags represent the opposite of things we usually associate with flags – nationalism and territoriality. They are more an invitation to give, to give up personal territory, to let go of the isms we cling to for our identity, to open out, to a place of insecurity, where we might also discover a sense of belonging. Sounds contradictory. It's not something we can negotiate, bargain with or figure out, but it is something we could experience, directly, for ourselves, rather than needing to believe in something because I, or anyone else has said it is so.

The four animals, tiger, lion, garuda and dragon – four dignities, meek, perky, outrageous and inscrutable – are invitations to how we might engage with the world, yet also expressions of open space. Wild animals, not anything we might catch and put in a conceptual cage, yet inviting inquisitiveness, always remembering, that it isn't the finger, but what the finger is pointing at, that is most important. They are drala, in Tibetan, typically translated as war





gods, or above the enemy, as are the figures on horseback, giving us a clue about how we might proceed, with feisty energy, a warrior spirit, yet always with gentleness, cutting through both aggression or any idea of enemy, embodying the sense of victory over war.

Beyond that, there is no way of preventing challenges from arising and some of us seem to get an awful lot more, than what seems to be our fair share! There is no way of manufacturing an easy life – we just have to face up – heart up – to what comes along. The workings of karma are unfathomable, except for a Buddha so, beyond using common sense, no point trying to figure out. There is, however, the possibility of a different perspective, when things rub us up the wrong way – rather than being ground down into despair, sparks of wakefulness could arise, like striking a match. Might sound doubtful, might sound outrageous, but don't take my word for it – give it a go! It might not seem very safe – so many sharp edges – it isn't, yet I would still suggest that it is something we might, all try at home – no big deal – it's all very ordinary and, yet extraordinary, at the same time.

I've attempted to touch on essential points, but have barely skimmed the surface, having learnt a lot about windhorse, partly through formal training, but largely through the many mistakes I've made. Hoping it is helpful in some way.

[Appreciating the kindness of all my teachers, Kyabje Chime Rinpoche, students of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and, definitely, including the innumerable, often painful, mistakes and disappointments, I've encountered along the way].



Being on Staff

by John Davies

Did I have any spiritual experiences at Marpa house?

I feel that this is a difficult question to answer as when at Marpa the definition of spiritual or not blurs into a state where questions and answers dissolve into one another. I certainly learnt a lot about myself, things that were not particularly pleasant or complementary to my crusty ego enhancing patterns. And I am extremely grateful for the friendships and relationships that grew out of my time there. I know that I irritated and annoyed others but I know also that this occurred in an environment that allows our individual foibles to reveal themselves and then, hopefully mutate into some kind of wisdom.

In the six years since I was on staff at Marpa I've certainly come to admire and appreciate all the other students who have volunteered their time to keeping this precious place functioning over so many years.

All of this occurs in a special environment, a place replete with blessings of our kind teacher and all the teachers of the Buddhist path who have infused this place with the lineage blessings.

There were certainly some things that occurred there that defy the accepted expectations of the modern mentality but which are in perfect harmony with the Buddhist worldview. But as these are really personal in nature I'll keep the details to myself, and not enhance my spiritual materialism unnecessarily.

I would thoroughly recommend going on staff at Marpa House to anyone considering some time out from their usual routine. It probably won't be easy, or spiritually ecstatic, but I feel that you will learn about yourself and your spiritual path.



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*MARPA HOUSE TEACHINGS &
EVENTS PROGRAMME
January - June 2019*

We would greatly appreciate it if you could book in advance for events. You can do this by contacting the secretary by email: mail@marpahouse.org.uk or by telephone: 01799 584415. It is very useful for us to have an idea of numbers to assist our planning and preparation.

Thank you in advance.

January



MEDITATION PRACTICE DAY LED BY BRIAN RICHARDSON

Sunday 6th January 10.30am and 2.30pm

Free of charge, and suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Lunch is available for £5.00 but needs to be booked in advance.

This will be a day of 'Tranquil Abiding' meditation, based on instructions in the book 'Mind at Ease' by Traleg Rinpoche.

Brian has been a student of Kyabje Chime Rinpoche's for over twenty years and has been given a White Sangha robe as a symbol of permission to teach.

Please join us and start the New Year in peaceful meditation with an aspiration for the happiness of all beings.

TIBETAN LANGUAGE DAY

Sunday 20th January 10.30am and 2.00pm

Fee for the day: £10, includes lunch.

For anyone wanting to improve their Tibetan, we will be reading and translating Dharma texts. Please join us, all welcome!

February



MAHAKALA PRACTICE LED BY LAMA ALASDAIR

Friday 1st February, Saturday 2nd February, and Sunday 3rd February. Daily at 2.30pm

By donation, all welcome. Lunch is available for £5.50 but needs to be booked in advance.

Traditionally, an extensive form of the Dharma Protector Mahakala practice is done before the New Year to avert obstacles for the year ahead.



Lama Alasdair has completed the traditional three-year retreat and was the resident Lama for many years at Kyabje Chime Rinpoche's centre in the Black Forest in Germany.



LOSAR CELEBRATIONS FOR THE TIBETAN NEW YEAR OF THE FEMALE EARTH PIG

Tuesday 5th February at 2.30pm

Losar Tashi Deleg! Happy New Year! Please come and join us for a Lhasang bonfire on this joyful start to the Tibetan New Year. May the coming year bring peace and happiness to all.

Saturday 9th February at 2.30pm

All welcome. Lunch is available for £5.50 but needs to be booked in advance.

Come and celebrate with a tea party and bonfire. Traditionally, Losar is a holiday and time of celebration; join us for another Lhasang bonfire. Dress up, drink butter tea and party! We will also offer Khataks and have a recitation of 'Calling the Lama from Afar'.

Please bring (vegetarian) food to share, also feel free to bring any unwanted Dharma texts or papers to burn.

TIBETAN LANGUAGE DAY

Sunday 17th February 10.30am and 2.00pm

Fee for the day: £10, includes lunch.

For anyone who can read Tibetan and use a dictionary, we will be reading and translating Dharma texts. Please join us, all welcome!

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CHENRESIG PUJA? LED BY BRIAN RICHARDSON

Saturday 23rd February 10.30am to 4.30pm

£15 for the day. Lunch is available for £5.50 but needs to be booked in advance.

The Chenresig Puja is one of the main daily practices at Marpa House. There are many visualisations included in it. The first aim of the day will be to learn how to write the six-syllable mantra of Chenresig. This will support our visualisation during the Puja. There will then be a sequence of slowly paced guided meditations to familiarise ourselves with the different stages of the Puja. This will be based on a commentary by Sangye Nyenpa Rinpoche. Finally we will practice the Puja slowly in English and Tibetan. All are welcome to a peaceful day of practice.



February cont.



INTRODUCTION TO LUCID DREAMING, LED BY BEN HENRIQUES

Saturday 2nd March 10.30am to 5.00pm

£15 for the day. Lunch is available for £5.50 but needs to be booked in advance.

Lucid Dreaming is being aware that you are dreaming during the dream itself. This awareness is a key part of Vajrayana dream practice and brings many personal and psychological benefits. For practitioners it can be a gateway to greater insights and far deeper meditation practice than is possible in the waking state.

Anyone can lucid dream and even one experience of the practice can be profoundly helpful. At this event, we will explore the role of lucid dreaming in the Tibetan tradition, the benefits of the practice and learn techniques we can apply in the waking state to help us get lucid while we dream. The focus will be on the basic techniques for getting lucid and absolutely no previous experience or knowledge is required. All you need is motivation and an open mind!

Ben has been a student of Kyabje Chime Rinpoche's for over ten years and ran the Young Sangha retreats until 2016. He has a white robe from Rinpoche as a symbol of permission to teach.

March



MEDITATION PRACTICE DAY LED BY A STUDENT OF KYABJE CHIME RINPOCHE

Sunday 3rd March 10.30am and 2.30pm

Free of charge, and suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Lunch is available for £5.50 but needs to be booked in advance.

A day of meditation practice.

VOLUNTEERS' WEEKEND

Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th March

Free meals and accommodation in exchange for some hard work! Day volunteers are also very welcome.

We welcome enthusiastic volunteers to help our hard working staff and committee spruce up the House and garden. No special knowledge or skills required, and tools are provided. Please come and join in!

March cont.



TIBETAN LANGUAGE DAY

Sunday 17th March 10.30am and 2.00pm

Fee for the day: £10, includes lunch.

For anyone who can read Tibetan and use a dictionary, we will be reading and translating Dharma texts. Please join us, all welcome!

CHOD RETREAT LED BY VICKI TOFTS

Friday 22nd March 8.00pm to Sunday 24th March 5.00pm

£100 for the retreat including two nights' accommodation and meals.

This weekend is for those who have taken part in previous Chod courses at Marpa House. We will begin with Chod on Friday evening and continue with four sessions in Saturday and three on Sunday, with Mahamudra meditation sessions in between. This is a wonderful opportunity to deepen your connection to the practice in a wonderfully sacred space.



If you have your own instruments, please bring them along. Marpa House has a limited number of spare instruments for people to borrow. Vicki has been a student of Kyabje Chime Rinpoche's for over ten years and is a member of the White Sangha. We are delighted that she will be leading us through this beautiful practice here at Marpa House.

March-April



MAHAMUDRA RETREATS LED BY LAMA KLAUS

From Saturday 30th March to Saturday 13th April

Enjoy exploring your own mind! A wonderful chance to enjoy the depth and richness of a silent retreat.

Two retreat options – either really deepen your experience with a whole week of closed silent retreat OR enjoy a flexible week where you can join in as a day/overnight guest and get an inspiring dose of meditation practice in our beautiful shrineroom. Or join us for the whole two weeks! You can also use the time for your personal practice and enjoy the supportive group atmosphere. Lama Klaus will be available for individual meditation advice and instruction.

March-April cont.



Saturday 30th March 9.30am up to and including Saturday 6th April, 2.00pm.

£280 including accommodation and meals for the whole week. This includes a £50 non-refundable deposit payable when booking to secure your place. Please note: Places for the one-week retreat are limited so early booking is advisable.

Closed, silent Mahamudra retreat. The House will not be open to day visitors during this time.

Sunday 7th April 9.30am to Saturday 13th April 5.00pm

£15 for each day plus accommodation and meals (usual prices apply).

Day retreat – sessions start 9.30am and 2pm each day.

Lama Klaus has been a student of Kyabje Chime Rinpoche's for over thirty years and has completed the traditional three-year retreat at HH 17th Karmapa's retreat centre, Karma Triyana Dharmachakra.

May



MAY TEACHINGS AND GREEN TARA EMPOWERMENT WITH PASANG TULKU RINPOCHE

Saturday 4th, Sunday 5th and Monday 6th May

£30 each day. Full programme will be published nearer the time.



Venerable Tulku Pasang Rinpoche is the Heart Son of His Eminence 18th Dulmo Choje Rinpoche, and a nephew of Kyabje Chime Rinpoche. He was recognised in 2003 by HH 17th Gyalwang Karmapa and HE 12th Chamgon Tai Situpa as the reincarnation of 3rd Chime Drubpi Wangpo Rinpoche, retreat master of Damkar Monastery. Currently, Pasang Rinpoche is Principal of the Damkar Institute as well as leading Damkar centre in Hong Kong and supporting the monastery and nunnery in Tibet. Fluent in English and Chinese as well as Tibetan, we are honoured and delighted that he is joining us to teach and give an empowerment this weekend.

Green Tara is a female Buddha of fearless compassion, who is said to swiftly benefit anyone who calls on her for help. She removes obstacles and bestows blessings, and her practice offers a complete path for achieving realisation. We perform her short sadhana daily at Marpa House; this empowerment is ideal for anyone wanting to establish or renew a connection with Green Tara and this exquisite practice.

TIBETAN LANGUAGE DAY

Sunday 19th May 10.30am and 2.00pm

Fee for the day: £10, includes lunch.

For anyone who can read Tibetan and use a dictionary, we will be reading and translating Dharma texts. Please join us, all welcome!

May cont.



LUCID DREAMING AND TIBETAN DREAM YOGA RETREAT LED BY PAUL WOOTTON

Saturday 25th May 10.30am to Monday 27th May lunchtime

£100 for the retreat including two nights' accommodation and meals.

A weekend retreat exploring Western lucid dreaming techniques and Tibetan dream yoga. We will explore both daytime mindfulness techniques and those of the night.



Dream yogas begin with lucid dreaming and help us to develop meditative clarity while dreaming and while deeply asleep. If we learn to wake up out of delusional and unconscious awareness while dreaming and asleep we are more likely to see through our waking delusions.

Please note that this course is only open to those who have some prior experience in lucid dreaming or dream yoga.

Paul has been a student of Kyabje Chime Rinpoche's since 1974 and is a member of the White Sangha. Paul began studying Western lucid dreaming techniques in 2007 and has subsequently received training in Tibetan dream yoga directly from Rinpoche over the last eight years.

June



AN EXPLORATION OF THE 'EIGHT CONSCIOUSNESSES' AND HOW THEY WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE OUR OWN REALITY. LED BY FRANÇOISE GUILLOT

Saturday 1st June 10.30am and 2.30pm

£15 for the day, and suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Lunch is available for £5.50 but needs to be booked in advance.

We are all dreamers, trapped in a kind of trance. Everything we experience seems to be very real and tangible — the more we grasp at it and feed it with our thoughts and emotions, the more the world all around us appears to be real, solid, and immovable.

The principle of the Eight Consciousnesses explains in a brilliant way how the mind is constructing, piece by piece, this reality of our daily life, and how to escape from this trance to full awakening!



Françoise Guillot is part of the White Sangha of her root-teacher Kyabje Chime Rinpoche. Rinpoche recently gave her permission to teach the Dharma, especially in the tradition of Khenpo Gangshar Wangpo, the root Guru of Chime Rinpoche, as well as an important teacher of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Thrangu Rinpoche.

Françoise's heart concern is how to integrate the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha Dharma in our everyday life, connecting traditional, authentic instructions with practical advice for the difficulties of our present times.

MEDITATION PRACTICE DAY LED BY FRANÇOISE GUILLOT

Sunday 2nd June 10.30am and 2.30pm

Free of charge, and suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Lunch is available for £5.50 but must be booked in advance.

A day of Shi-Neh or calm-abiding meditation practice.

PRAYER FLAGS – BLESSINGS CARRIED ON THE BREEZE

We will be busy making new prayer flags from Wednesday 5th June to Sunday 16th June.

When we first started making prayer flags many years ago, Rinpoche said that the prayer flag project is an opportunity for the artists and craftspeople among our Dharma community to offer their skills. In addition to the skills of printing and machine sewing there are many other jobs which are essential in making prayer flags, like ironing, cutting of fabric and hand stitching the flags onto the ropes. These are suitable for all!

Please volunteer to help us, whatever your skills.

Students working on the prayer flags can stay at Marpa House free of charge but a contribution towards the cost of the meals would be welcome.

We very much regret that we will not be able to accommodate any house or retreat guests during this time as the entire Marpa House building will be taken over by volunteers.

SUMMER TEA PARTY AND FLAG RAISING

Saturday 22nd June & Sunday 23rd June

Free of charge.

Please join us for a wonderful weekend in the garden, and the raising of the new prayer flags, always a joyful occasion! Exact days and timings will be confirmed closer to the time.





ANNUAL MEETING FOR MEMBERS

Saturday 6th July 2.30pm

This meeting is for Foundation and Subscription Members of Marpa House only. Full details will be sent to members nearer the time.

MEDITATION PRACTICE DAY LED BY A STUDENT OF KYABJE CHIME RINPOCHE

Sunday 7th July 10.30am and 2.30pm

Free of charge, and suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Lunch is available for £5.50 but must be booked in advance.

A day of Shi-Neh or calm-abiding meditation practice.

TIBETAN LANGUAGE DAY

Sunday 14th July 10.30am and 2pm

Fee for the day: £10, includes lunch.

For anyone who can read Tibetan and use a dictionary, we will be reading and translating Dharma texts. Please join us, all welcome!

TRALEG KHANDRO

Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st July 2019

We are absolutely delighted that Traleg Khandro is returning to Marpa House— please save the date! Full details to follow.

ADVANCE NOTICE

KYABJE CHIME RINPOCHE'S 80TH BIRTHDAY IS IN OCTOBER 2019. DETAILS OF CELEBRATIONS TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON.



The Venerable Lama Samten at Marpa House

We were delighted to welcome the Venerable Lama Samten for two incredible weekends in September and November, when he taught on 'Base, Path and Fruition' and also 'The Unity of Creation and Completion Stages'.



Lunchtime!



Ven. Lama Samten conducting
Sur Fire Puja



November teaching group



September teaching group



Preparations for Sur Fire Puja



Tralegh Khandro at Marpa House July 2018

by Dominique Simpson



Tralegh Khandro began her talk by explaining that the topic announced in the Marpa House newsletter was incorrect, as she had sent the wrong article by mistake because of computer problems. This, of course, sent everyone roaring with laughter; after which we were ready to listen.

The topic of the course was Mahamudra meditation and how it differs from Shamatha or tranquility meditation. In Shamatha, we try to calm the mind, which is useful when we begin on the path and also at the beginning of a meditation session, as the mind is not workable if it is too wild. But in Mahamudra we go further and look at the mind directly to understand how it works. There are three aspects to the mind: essence or insubstantiality (also called emptiness), clarity (or luminosity) and creativity (also called bliss). The creative aspect generates constant thoughts, but this is not a problem in itself. The problem lies in how we relate to our thoughts.

When we feel peaceful and there are not too many thoughts, we tend to cling to this, whereas when the mind becomes agitated, we feel averse to it. In Mahamudra meditation we treat all thoughts and states of mind equally, accepting what arises and trusting in the process. We know that thoughts have no substance and cannot taint our Buddha-nature, just like clouds only hide the sun from view. Often when our meditation is peaceful and not much happens, we tend to relax our focus and go to sleep, but when a disturbing thought or emotion comes up, we focus very tightly on this. In fact what we need to do is just the opposite. When our meditation is calm, it's time to sharpen our focus and wake up. When a disturbing emotion comes up, we should arrest the tendency to analyse it and generate further thoughts, and instead relax into the vastness of the mind, almost not meditate, just sit there until the emotion subsides.

Khandro-la also introduced us to various Vipashyana techniques of analytical meditation. One exercise that stuck in my mind involved creating an uplifted feeling, then a downhearted feeling and moving between the two states of mind faster and faster. The point of the exercise was to show how we generate whatever happens in our mind. After shifting a few times between happy and miserable, both states of mind seemed almost irrelevant.



Khandro-la made a distinction between meditation on the cushion and post-meditation. In Mahamudra meditation we consider all phenomena equally, but in our daily lives, we need to discriminate and make choices. We need ego to function in the world and we need labels to communicate with each other. But the practice of Mahamudra will make us more open and flexible. We cannot experience the world outside our minds. How we relate to the world is coloured by past experience, habit and prejudice. On the cushion, we see the samsaric mind in its full glory, how we are constantly creating our own misery. This awareness will gradually filter into our daily lives, helping us relax our tight grip on our "story", habits and opinions and become freer. We become master of our mind instead of its slave.

Tralegh Khandro said much more, not all of which can be related here. Her graceful, loving presence and sharp humour spread joy around the house. I can only thank her with all my heart for these wonderful teachings.





Ralph Adrian Woods

8th January 1932 - 31st August 2018

“May all beings be happy, be free from all suffering and be the True Nature.”

Ralph Adrian Woods was born in 1932 and grew up in Southall, Middlesex. Aged 17 he joined the Civil Service, which he did not enjoy.

In the 1970's, the late HH the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa, the previous incarnation of the head of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, said of him to Lama Chime Rinpoche that Ralph was a 'very able man'. He was. Highly intelligent and widely read with a sharp wit and a good sense of humour. He was, moreover, a good man with a good heart who loved nothing better than to aid Lama Chime often with his English usage in important papers and talks in various universities and places of learning.

Sadly, in his latter years, probably due to his failing eyesight through glaucoma, he could no longer read his beloved books and became reclusive, often shunning the company of friends and preferring solitude.



The one exception was myself, his ex-wife. We were very close friends who 'looked out' for each other; speaking each evening on the phone and going food shopping regularly or meeting for coffee.

I will truly miss him. How he put up with me is something to be wondered at! But I believe that now he is happy at last, although all who knew and loved him will sadly miss him.

Pippa de Gobeo

Ann Brunskill

We are sad to share the news that Ann Brunskill passed away peacefully on 27 November 2018.

Ann will be greatly missed by all and be fondly remembered for her joyful nature and optimism, as well as her strength and determination to live life to the full.

We all pray that she will have a happy and good rebirth.



Counselling

by Joyce McCleary



I have recently been given a White Sangha robe by our Precious Kyabje Chime Rinpoche in Cornwall.

At the time He said that 'we (the White Sangha) can do anything, teach, advise or counsel'. This led me to think I could offer my time to people that wanted to talk about or resolve daily issues.

I would not be a great teacher but I have a working background in Psychodynamic counselling. Rinpoche encouraged me to get a certificate in relationship counselling after I had my two daughters.

I have been a student of Rinpoche's since 1972 and worked as the cook at Marpa House for 18 months while I did my Four Foundations. I then moved on to open up a shop in London with Celia. At the time Rinpoche was working at the British Museum and the shop was a popular meeting place for Dharma students.

In 1981 I married Ross and we had two beautiful daughters and it was after this family time that I started my career in counselling. I also reconnected with shop matters when Rinpoche suggested I become a director of Zambhala. I continue to run the shop which financially supports Marpa House and Amrita Dzong.

I am totally committed to Rinpoche's work and now as a member of the White Sangha I hope I can contribute by listening and supporting his students in a private and confidential way.

You are welcome to get in touch by email, joycemccleary@gmail.com or phone on 0790 4093897.

Yours Faithfully in the Dharma.

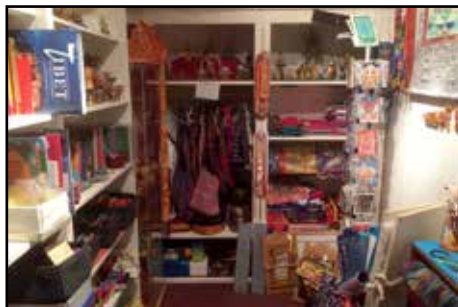




The family weekend was an amazing time for us all to come together and spread joy and happiness.
(Akari Barter, 12 years old)

The Zambhala Shop at Marpa House sells all things Tibetan and Buddhist, from Thangkas and Rupas to Books and Shawls. Just ask the Secretary when visiting.

For mail order or if you have any questions please contact Joyce McCleary via email for more information: joycemccleary@gmail.com



Marpa House Accommodation prices are:

As of the 1st February 2019 Marpa House accommodation prices will be as follows:

Standard House Charge (dormitory accommodation and 3 vegetarian meals)

£27.50 per night £165 per week

Standard Retreat Charge (single room accommodation and 3 vegetarian meals)

£33.00 per night £198 per week

Further discounts are available for retreats of four weeks or more, provided they are pre-booked and pre-paid.

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