

Dharma Friends

***Dedicated to Sharing the Dharma, Healing Each Other,
All Sentient Beings and Ourselves.***

November 2005 issue #106

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The DHAMMAPADA **The teachings of the Buddha**



Verse 24: Desire

On Compulsive Urges

Spoken in the Jetavana Grove:

1. The compulsive urges of the thoughtless grow like a creeper. They jump like a monkey from one life to another, looking for fruit in the forest.
2. When these urges drive us, sorrow spreads like wild grasses. Conquer these fierce cravings and sorrow will fall away from your life like drops of water from a lotus leaf.
3. Therefore I say, dig up craving, root and all, as you would uproot birana grass, if you don't want Mara to crush you as the stream crushes reeds on its banks. As a tree, though cut down, recovers and grows if its roots are not destroyed, suffering will come to you more and more if these compulsive urges are not extinguished.
4. Wherever the thirty-six streams flow from the mind toward pleasure, the currents will sweep that

unfortunate person away. The currents flow everywhere. Creepers of passion grow everywhere. Whenever you see one growing in your mind, uproot it with wisdom.

5. All human beings are subject to attachment and thirst for pleasure. Hankering after these, they are caught in the cycle of birth and death. Driven by this thirst, they run about frightened like a hunted hare, suffering more and more. Driven by this thirst, they run about frightened like a hunted hare. Overcome this thirst and be free.

Spoken in the Bamboo Grove:

6. Look at those who manage to come out of one forest of cravings, only to be driven into another. Though free, they run into bondage again.

Spoken in the Jetavana Grove:

7. Fetters of wood, rope, or even iron, say the wise, are not as strong as selfish attachment to wealth and family. Such fetters drag us down and are hard to break. Break them by overcoming selfish desires, and turn from the world of sensory pleasure without a backward glance.

8. Like a spider caught in its own web is a person driven by fierce cravings. Break out of the web, and turn away from the world of sensory pleasure and sorrow.

9. If you want to reach the other shore of existence, give up what is before, behind, and in between. Set your mind free, and go beyond birth and death.

10. If you want to reach the other shore, don't let doubts, passion and cravings strengthen your fetters. Meditate deeply, discriminate between the pleasant and the permanent, and break the fetters of Mara.

Spoken to Mara:

11. One who is free from fear, thirst, and sin has removed all the thorns from his life. This body is his last.

12. He is supremely wise who is free from compulsive urges and attachments, and who understands what words really stand for. This body is his last.

Spoken on the way from Gaya:

13. I have conquered myself and live in purity. I know all. I have left everything behind, and live in freedom. Having taught myself, to whom shall I point as teacher?

Spoken in the Jetavana Grove:

14. There is no gift better than the gift of dharma, no gift more sweet, no gift more joyful. It puts an end to cravings and the sorrow they bring.

Spoken in the Jetavana Grove:

15. Wealth harms the greedy, but not those who seek nirvana. Of little understanding, the greedy harm themselves and those around them.

At the White Carpet Stone:

16. Greed ruins the mind as weeds ruin fields. Therefore honor those who are free from greed.

17. Lust ruins the mind as weeds ruin fields. Therefore honor those who are free from lust.

18. Hatred ruins the mind as weeds ruin fields. Therefore honor those who are free from hatred.

19. Selfish desires ruin the mind as weeds ruin fields. Therefore honor those who are free from selfish desire.

Some Thoughts on This Dhammapada Verse: DESIRE

This verse is likely to be one that we can all identify with! Even His Holiness the Dalai Lama joked about desire arising when he came to the United States for the first time in 1980. He was giving the first Kalachakra teachings for world peace in Madison, Wisconsin, and before the events started his hosts took him to some shopping centers. Laughingly, he shared that he found himself wanting many of the tempting and fun gadgets that he had never seen in India or Tibet. But, like this verse says, even though desire may arise, the meditation is to merely watch. In this way, we gradually become free of compulsive urges and eventually from desire itself. We grow into the capacity to live in meditation of watching desire, clinging, grasping, fantasizing, and all

of the body's and mind's responses, the entire emotional gamut that we might run, and then to watch the falling away of desire and all that accompanies it. This takes lots of practice and discipline.

Our verse, Desire, tells us of the great benefit that comes by not giving power to compulsive urges. I know that for me, even though I know it is important, it is still a challenge to keep that moment to moment focus when desire stirs and to not be seduced by it. We may have a brief lapse of awareness or it might be that we are sitting in meditation and we drift to desire and instantly, we are off on a long fantasy about something we want. We float away with - How can I get the object of my desire? How to get the money? Which one to get? Who can help me? What if they won't help!? What would others say if I got it (or didn't)? And on and on. An hour later, we look up at the clock and our meditation has been totally about desire and we were never aware of being caught up in the unfolding drama. I suspect all of us know too well, that there are even more horrific consequences when desire or compulsive urges bypass awareness or even bypass our judgement and we act in self-destructive and other destructive ways. Maybe some of you are in prison because of desire.

We are not talking about squelching desire. Desire will arise. But we also are told to cut through to the roots of desire to lessen its arising. There are many helpful meditations that can be done to help cut the roots of desire in the way that our verse talks about. We can simplify our environment and try to eliminate the objects of desire from our life. There are more austere practices such as sitting for many years in caves or monasteries with nothing to feed or fulfill our desires. Those in prison have said that such a setting has helped them cut desire in a similar way. We can take vows that limit what we can pursue. We can do analytical meditations about the emptiness nature or the true nature of that which we desire as a means to lessen our attachments. The meditation of watching desire arise and then fall away contributes to loosening the compelling nature of desire because we no longer feed it. It is said that even for the most accomplished meditator, desire in some form will continue to arise until one is fully enlightened. For this reason, if we see all desire as an opportunity to rest in equanimity with complete awareness, then there isn't even a categorization of subtle desire or strongly compelling addictions. It is all just "desire" arising and falling away. It is not justifiable desire or frivolous desire. It is all desire arising and falling away. We may choose to act on some desires and not on others from a state of clarity and awareness, and then even the acting on desire can be a meditation. With this clarity, one is not driven by desire but is resting in spacious awareness as an arm moves, perhaps a bite of food is taken, an object is purchased or an interaction is entered into. This is living life as meditation as events unfold and our actions are not compulsive actions. They are actions chosen as they arise out of a balanced wisdom state and actions carry our loving intention to be of benefit.



A Meditation



Our meditation this month is another practice that can help us cut the roots of desire.

The practice of kindness that we have discussed so often is a powerful one to heighten our awareness of and to transcend desire. If we are mindful of the suffering of others and our greatest desire is for others to have all that they need to be free of pain, we can watch our desire arise within a heart felt compassion and motivation to benefit all beings. When desire arises, imagine someone that might need that which we desire more than we do. Be aware of who we could give that object of our desire to. This is a very

powerful meditation that can be done in our daily sitting time or in our aware actions of everyday life.

Here is a simple example of this meditation. We'll call this our peanut butter cookie meditation.

We are in the middle of our meditation session and desire arises for a package of peanut butter cookies. Since we are meditating, we remember to watch desire arise but then we get stuck and distracted on thoughts of cookies. Desire for cookies soon falls away but then it arises again. We go back and forth, again and again, thinking of peanut butter cookies and trying to meditate. We attempt to watch this unfolding with equanimity. The desire becomes a bit more compelling and distracting as we try to maintain our meditative focus. So, we take this next step. We imagine who would benefit from the peanut butter cookies more than we would and we make a vow to give them the cookies and to dedicate the cookies to their happiness. This step of our meditation draws on discipline that helps to cut through to the root of "cookie greediness". It hits home in a way that challenges our greed. This meditation not only allows us to focus on greed but also helps us to purify all of those aspects of our ego-self that places our self-interest over that inner bodhisattva who wants to benefit others. The next step, if we can do it, is to get up after our meditation session and, with awareness, get the package of peanut butter cookies that we stored away for a treat for ourselves. With total awareness and an open heart, we give it to the person that we visualized in our meditation. We offer the cookies to this individual with the blessing that they will be happy (but not in an obvious way or they will wonder about us!).

You can probably see the danger in this meditation. If we offer this gift because we are trying to be a good meditator or practitioner or saintly being, and then we walk away full of resentment and feeling that we have just given away our cookies, then we are undoing the benefit of the action, and we are increasing our own inner greediness or desire for cookies. We have to make a realistic assessment of our individual capacity. If we aren't honest in this assessment, we can create suffering for ourselves and others. Remember, we are looking for a "middle way". Our practices are not so depriving that we create a situation where we cannot focus on our open heart, but not so self-indulgent and deceptive that we are seduced into materialism and an ordinary view of reality. If we want to make an offering to others but we cannot follow through on it without resentment, then we can always do it just in our visualization and in our hearts. I believe that still has benefit. Stay in touch with all that arises and be aware of your own capacity.

There is likely to be a gradual process of steps to take before we can fully give away the cookies. Our first step is to watch desire arise and to rest in equanimity without taking any compulsive action. To get to this first step is to come a very long way beyond what the typical person does in a society driven by desire.

The second step is to feel an awakening of bodhichitta motivation, or that wish to benefit others. Our desire becomes a reminder that all beings have this same desire and our joy is in fulfilling their desires.

Third is to feel our heartfelt generosity. Can we fully and unstintingly give something that we desire to another?

If so, the fourth step is to do so, dedicating the benefit of fulfilling their needs to all beings everywhere.

Ultimately, in this meditative process we rest in equanimity as desire arises and awareness and concentration will not waver. With this clarity of awareness, we will not absentmindedly engage in compulsive action.

We will become aware of attachment and other emotions like fear that are linked to desire.

We can, at first, remember and later, as we are more accomplished, we will know the true and pure nature of all that we desire and of desire itself.

We can awaken to our open heart as we rest in this meditative state. There, we wish for all beings to be happy and to have all that they need to be free of suffering. In that state of generosity which is applied to all beings equally, we can give away what we possess in order to benefit others, and most importantly, we offer the pure mind of enlightenment and great compassion to all.

So your meditation this month is to give away your cookies as joyfully as you possibly can.

FROM YOUR LETTERS:



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Remember: the inner state of gratefulness brings balance and harmony to our physical, emotional and spiritual self and is a transcendent state.

Before I share your letters, let me repeat a few thoughts that I wrote in last month's Dharma Friends about a meditative state that you might hold while reading these pages and use as a way to practice holding all that unfolds in our lives.

This regular section in Dharma Friends is the most important part of our newsletter in my view. Sometimes you might write us a letter just to share your life and then find yourself reading it here in this column. That is because when I read what you have written, I am struck by how others might identify with your experience or learn from you. If you do not want your letters shared you can always put on them - NOT FOR DHARMA FRIENDS. (For some of you, it might be too late. Sorry.) I also just use initials unless you request otherwise because I don't want your confidentiality violated. I try to share all letters intended specifically for Dharma Friends, and I do not edit those - except accidentally. Some letters are personal life stories and questions. Often there are responses to previous letters - sometimes in support of and sometimes critical of others. Some letters may contain one's dharma understanding from various traditions, and some may contain Buddhist material that is an individual's own interpretation that others may agree or disagree with. Know always that my writings and those of other Dharma Friends are always just ideas and that when writing about spiritual truth, we all are writing about something that can not be understood in words. This newsletter is not to show who has the best intellect! Our growth can only come from our own inner research and experience. It is a great exercise to write and to read these letters because they help us to get to know each other. More importantly, it is a great meditation exercise. Like all our responses to everything that arises in the world, we have an opportunity to watch our own thoughts and beliefs start to swirl wildly when we read what others share. Our on-going life-long meditation exercise, including while we read this newsletter, is to notice how opinions and stories might stir us. The task is to rest in equanimity with an open heart and to allow whatever appears in our mind to be fully experienced in each moment. As we read this From Your Letters column, see it is a little microcosm of the world that reflects our mind and all of its attachments. Only the results of deep and subtle exploration and practice will allow us to know the unknowable. All the words on all these pages and all of the teachings from all of

us, of our teachers, and throughout history only offer hints of the dharma. They will never benefit us as much as watching our mind. Enjoy this meditation of watching your mind as you read on.

From T.B.: I agree with much of what R.N. reports. I have also ran into brick walls when it comes to a Sangha in prison. The prison system revolves around Christian programs. Programs that help many prisoners and their families. Enough can never be said for the help Christian groups offer to inmates.

Muslims and Christians are the dominant religious group in the Texas prison system. The Muslims get all these special showers and meals and programs all in the name of their self created deity. The prison system pampers them ... and they had better.. If they don't the Muslims will have the NAACP, ACLU and every other civil rights group pounding down the Prison Director's doors. They would even riot if there self claimed religious rights were denied. They are the most obnoxious, violent and threatening prison group in the entire prison system. They constantly complain and stomp their feet about everything they disagree with.. Is that the way to end suffering? Is that how we want to be known and classified as Buddhists??? Would the Buddha want us to force our practice on a system??? I think not. Animosity cannot dispel animosity. This is an ancient law. It has not changed. It will only be through compassion and understanding that the Texas Prison system come to accept Buddhism. until it does I urge all Buddhists to live peacefully and continue their practice in the true spirit of the Buddha's teachings and do not try to force the prison system via the Courts to accept Buddhism.

I have been practicing Buddhism in TDCJ for three years now and my right to practice my beliefs have never been denied nor has any of my Buddhist literature. I challenge all Buddhists incarcerated in Texas to be an example of the Buddha. Be patient and let things flow as they naturally will and Buddhism will prevail. It will be accepted once it is

understood and it will be welcomed in the system. It's always prevailed and it always will.

May our lives be ones of wisdom and compassion. The religious practice - brahmachariya under the Lord is conducted for utter Bibbana without attachment. So it is, Monks, That this religious practice brahmachariya is not for advantage or gains, honors or fame; it is not for advantage in knowledge and vision. That, monks which is unshakeable freedom of mind, this is the goal, monks of this practice, this the pith, this the culmination. M.I.197, 204-5; JLS.I244

From anna - I'll add here that I know many of you in minority religions have had difficult experiences with those in other spiritual traditions, but many, many of the Muslims in our Arkansas prison system live the very highest ideals of their religious beliefs and are models of peace and love, just are many Christians, Jews, Sheiks, Wiccans, those of Native American traditions and others. Let's keep drawing our circle of one family bigger and bigger!

Brute force, no matter how strongly applied, can never subdue the basic human desire for freedom and dignity. It is not enough, as communist systems have assumed, merely to provide people with food, shelter and clothing. Human nature needs to breathe the precious air of liberty.

-His Holiness the Dalai Lama

It is better to light one small candle than to curse the darkness. (Confucius, BC 551-479 Chinese Ethical Teacher Philosopher)

And, another piece from Dr. Daniel Amen's on-line column:

"Brain in the News" is an on-line weekly commentary on how brain science relates to the news. The brain is involved in everything we do. Wherever there are human stories the brain is involved. From the impact of war and natural disasters on the brain to drug abuse scandals to courtroom dramas to politics the brain is in the news, and you can read about it here. 6/16/2005.



WHERE DID ALL THE NORMAL PEOPLE GO? MENTAL ILLNESS HITS HALF OF ALL AMERICANS

A once-in-a-decade survey of the mental health of Americans has found that disabling mental illness is as common as such chronic diseases as heart disease and cancer -- but strikes people at a much younger age, with more lasting impact on their lives. About half of Americans will develop a mental disorder at some time in their lives, the survey of nearly 10,000 U.S. adults found -- with half of those cases starting by age 14, and three-quarters by age 24. Mental disorders are really the most important chronic conditions of youth in America," said Ronald Kessler, a Harvard Medical School epidemiologist and one of the study's leaders. "Sadly ... these early onset disorders very seldom come to the attention of the treatment system unless they're very severe." He said the study underscores the need for early detection and treatment.

Many cases begin with mild symptoms, such as low-level anxiety or persistent shyness. Left untreated, however, they can escalate into more serious depression, disabling phobias or clinical anxiety, with debilitating consequences later in life. Yet most Americans take years, even decades, to seek treatment -- 9 to 23 years for anxiety disorders -- if they seek treatment at all, the survey found. Moreover, when they do, only about 1 in 3 receives treatment in any given year that meets minimum standards of care, the survey found.

The findings, reported in the June issue of Archives of General Psychiatry, were based on

10,000 face-to-face interviews with people 18 and older. The survey, known as the National Comorbidity Survey Replication, is taken every 10 years to assess the mental health of the country. "This is really a landmark study," said Dr. Thomas Insel, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, which funded the study. "It's the result of five years of research on the prevalence of mental disorders in a nationally representative sample." The survey is the first to look at the frequency of seriously debilitating mental illness, defined as one that substantially interferes with a person's ability to function in normal roles. It found that about 6 percent of adults meet the criteria in any given year, which is comparable to rates of heart disease and cancer. Overall, 1 out of 4 people meet the criteria for some type of mental disorder in a given year, but the vast majority of those cases are mild and not all of them need treatment, the survey found. "We need to do a better job of figuring out which mild and moderate disorders are likely to become seriously debilitating in the future and which ones are self-limiting," Kessler said. "There's a lot of potential for working with early onset cases and doing early intervention to try to nip things in the bud."

The survey examined four categories of disorders: anxiety, such as panic and post-traumatic stress disorders; mood, such as depression and bipolar disorders; impulse-control, such as conduct and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder; and substance abuse -- alcohol and drug abuse. Kessler said it is "just staggering" that many of these disorders are occurring so early in life.

The average age of onset for anxiety disorders and impulse-control disorders is just 11 years old, the survey found, while substance abuse and mood disorders start later -- at average ages of 20 and 30 years old, respectively. Occurrence of these problems early in life interferes with achieving important milestones, such as graduating from high school or college, staying in a close relationship, or holding down a job, the researchers said. Those problems, in turn, can cause lifelong problems. "There are ripple effects through the life course," Kessler said. "These illnesses have a fundamental effect on how people's lives turn out. They are impaired before they have a chance to get their adult life on track."

The study authors did find reason for optimism. Treatment rates are higher today than they were 10 years ago. Among those with a mental disorder, 41 percent had sought help in the previous year, up from 25 percent when the survey was done in 1994. Nevertheless, the survey found that a large number of people never seek treatment. This was particularly true of people with substance abuse and impulse control disorders: Nearly half of those who met the criteria for one of the conditions during their lives failed to get treatment. Insel said that failure may be due in part to social stigma. "It raises the possibility that the stigma against treatment may be even greater than the stigma against the disorders themselves, something that those of us in the profession tend not to realize," he said. Among those who did seek treatment, there was a long lag time between the onset of problems and when they sought treatment, with average delays lasting years or even decades.

Disorders that start in childhood, although often more serious than those that start in adulthood, had the longest delays. The researchers speculated that minors may be less likely to receive timely treatment because recognition of symptoms is often low among their adult caregivers unless the symptoms are extreme.

Finally, and perhaps most depressing, the survey found that the quality of mental health care is dismal. Overall, only a third of people who had sought treatment in the previous 12

months received adequate care as defined by national professional guidelines, the survey found. The quality of care was the worst among general medical clinics and primary care settings. Only 13 percent of patients received "minimally adequate care" in those settings, compared with about 45 percent among those seeing psychiatrists, psychologists or social workers.

Our new radio show, Change Your Brain, Change Your Life, is receiving a more and more enthusiastic response. Once again, I answered questions again from all over the country. Tune in Saturdays at 8 – 9 AM (PST) on 1170 KCBQ in San Diego or 1300 KKOL in Seattle.

Some more quotes that offer perspective in a violent world from D.C.:

A new, spiritually based social activism is beginning to assert itself. It stems not from hating what is wrong and trying to fight it, but from loving what could be and making the commitment to bring it forth. (Marianne Williamson)

Those who have been immersed in the tragedy of massive death during wartime, and who have faced it squarely, never allowing their senses and feelings to become numbed and indifferent, have emerged from their experiences with growth and humanness greater than that achieved through almost any other means. (Elisabeth KuBler-Ross, 1926 Swiss-born American Psychiatrist)

We look forward to the time when the power to love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace. (William Edward Gladstone)

Why all of the violence in the human dance? Those whom are failing to ascend are failing to move up in vibration with Earth. In failing to move up in vibration with Earth, the discord increases surrounding their field. This increases the veils of illusion such that the beliefs that they hold become

their truth, just as the veils of illusion surrounding the Annanuki reflected back their own thoughts which then became their truth. In believing such paranoid thoughts to be true, such humans then manifests a crime of murder in the insanity of the paranoia.

All thoughts manifest beloved. If one holds onto a thought of violence, one shall experience violence. If one holds on to the thought of death, one shall manifest their death. If one holds on to the thought of separation, one shall manifest a divorce, separation or loss of job, and so on. At another time, one could fantasize about killing the boss, or killing the friend or teacher, or killing the parent, and not manifest it in physicality - at least not in the current lifetime. However, such fantasies would manifest in a future ancestor's life experience as a result of the fantasy nonetheless. (The Buffalo Species through Karen Danrich "Mila")

Within a duality reality you empower what you oppose. (Dean Fraser)

...the moment we create an enemy we can never have true peace, within our heart and in our everyday life. (Richard A Fletcher)

Dear Anna and my Dharma Buddies,

I want to thank you for all your metta and support that I received from you during my six years incarceration. Your support will never be forgotten. Your kind words will always be in my heart and remembered.

I would like to answer T.R. (Issue #104) question and, share my thoughts with him.

What is Non-duality? It used to mystify me too. Y'see - Non-duality is synonymous with reality, voidness, etc. Non-duality is to cut through the mind that makes subject and object, existence and non-existence, noumenon and phenomena. In the Bible this is called "being banished from the Garden of Eden." the Garden of Eden is a life of "unbroken simplicity. " because we ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we give birth to dualistic thinking. We step off the Absolute

Present with beautiful and ugly, impermanence and permanence, mine and yours, good and bad. I like this, I don't like that, subject and object. I try to get happiness and avoid suffering. We now lost that space of equanimity that lies between two thoughts, which means that we don't hear the still small voice whisper, and know that all is well. We are no more a free, self-regulating spirit but a mere man, karma-fettered and logically-minded. So now we split life into two divisions. And how you realize non-duality is to attain Non-dualistic wisdom - look at it this way: The Diamond Sutra said, "All formations are transient. If you view all appearance as non-appearance, you can see and realize your true self." This means, in your mind, don't be attached to anything. So finally you can say, "Like life to death and death to life. Coming and going is all the same."

What is Emptiness? Emptiness is also cutting of all thinking and becoming empty mind. As stated in the heart Sutra: "Form does not differ from the Void, and the void does not differ from Form. Form is the Void, and Void is Form: the same is true for feelings, conceptions, impulses and consciousness." Look at this: Before you were born, you were zero, no you are one: in the future, you will die and again become zero. So zero equals one, one equals zero. All things are the same. Why, because they are the same substance. All things have name and form, but their names and forms come from Emptiness and will return to emptiness. But this is still thinking. Don't forget, before thinking, there are no words and no speech. So there are no prison cells, no canteen, no rivers, no mountains, no God, no Buddha, nothing at all T.R. It's just intuitive action. Intuitive action means acting without any desire or attachment, it's like a clear mirror, reflecting everything unjust as it is, then you are th universe and the universe is you. This is the experience of true "Emptiness."

What is conditional arising and dependent origination? Yes! The two questions are related concepts. Since all things in the phenomenal world are brought into being from the seer itself. Life is a projection of the mind. We create our own conditional arising through our own thoughts, feelings and attitude. Man is the product of his thoughts and action and sole creator of his destiny. The experience is not

different from the experienced. T.R., remain alert to the world and it's events. Nothing outside of ourselves is attacking us. We are only assaulted by "our" thoughts, "our" needs, "our" attachments, all born from our identification with our false thinking which in turn creates a closed-in, separate, miserable. Life. The principle is that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of dependent origination.

What should you look for in your daily meditation and the mystical implications of Buddhism? This is a really good question. In your meditation "Don't" follow past thoughts, "Don't" anticipate the future, and "Don't" follow illusory thoughts that arise in the present, but turning within, observe your own true nature and maintain awareness of your natural mind, just as it is, beyond the conceptual limitation of past, present, and future.

Our rational mind is the one that thinks, analyzes, discriminates, plans, judges and counts. The intuitive, second sight or sixth sense, senses the truth. "If therefore think eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of Light - (Matthew 6:22). Mystically speaking, during deep meditation, the single or spiritual eye becomes visible within the central part of the forehead. This omniscient eye is variously referred to in scriptures as the third eye, star of the east, inner eye, dove descending from heaven, eye of Shiva, eye of intuition, and so on.

T.R., I hope this will clear up your wondering thoughts in the most immediate and intimate way and guide you on your spiritual journey. Yours in the Dharma,

The Elixir of Love

From the Divine Utterance

"I have a drink for my loyal ones.

When they drink, they rejoice.

When they rejoice, they seek.

When they seek, they ecstatically fall in Love.

When they fall in Love, they melt away.

When they melt, they unite.

When they unite, there is no difference between me and them

To the extent when they say "Be it" it Becomes!"

Translated from the Islamic text

and gifted to us from Faisal Muqqadam

From E.T.:

Dear Anna & Dharma Friends,

Hello. I hope you all are doing fine and all is well for you and you're all in good health. Once again I would like to thank you and **Dharma Friends** for sending me your newsletter. I enjoy reading every issue, and it also gave me a lot of good knowledge and great meditation advice. I've been meditating for a long time and have achieved a lot in breathing, energy flow, and mind meditations. When I do this meditation I see a great light coming from the Buddha. It's like I can see him clearly. Is this normal meditation? Anna, I also read in issue #100 that you have a web page for Innocents. I would like to get my case onto that Innocents page. I can use all the support I can get to get my sentence overturned and reduced my life sentence to a lower sentence.

(From a - If any of you are innocent and would like to share just a paragraph of your story on our **INNOCENTS** section of our **Compassion Works for All** web page, send me what you would like included. Like everything else, I am a bit behind but it will all be on there soon.)

As long as you have not realized the great principle that permeates all, it is essential that speech and action should support each other. Do not hold to the intellectual understanding of others; turn the light of awareness back to the root, and it is not there at all.

-Pao-chih

From C.D.: Hello my friends. .. I would like to ask for all of you to keep me in your thoughts. Also I have a request. I feel led to share dharma with others but almost every time I try, I am rejected and lashed out against. Could anyone

explain "Why people wont allow anyone to help enlighten them?" Also, I would like to thank Anna for her faithful devotion to sharing with us all. Your friend, C.D.

A questioner asked the Buddha: "I would like to know about the state of peace, the state of solitude and of quiet detachment. How does a person become calm, independent, and not wanting to grasp at anything?"

"A person does this," replied the Buddha, "by eradicating the delusion of 'I am.' By being alert and attentive, he begins to let go of cravings as they arise. But whatever he begins to accomplish, he should beware of inner pride. He must avoid thinking of himself as better than another, or worse or equal, for that is all comparison and emphasizes the self. "The person should look for peace within and not depend on it in any other place. For when a person is quiet within, the self cannot be found. There are no waves in the depths of the ocean, it is still and unbroken. It is the same with the peaceful person. He is still, without any longing to grasp. He has let go the foundations of self and no longer builds up pride and desire."

Sutta Nipata

From C.W.: Dear Dharma Friends, Thank you for the gift of your magazine. I am in prison at M.C. in Ca. I was sentenced to 13 years for a crime I did not commit. I did not understand why all this was happening to me. Then I began to study Buddhism. It has helped me to understand that life is so short and ever changing.

From Chogyi Lodro Patience: A Master Skill.

One must experience, the.
Clouds floating across the sky....
The river flowing...
The bird flying....
The baby crying.....
The flower blossoming....

One must be aware of.
The directions....
North -- South -- East -- West --.
The streets signs...
The parks.....
The byways -- highways.

One must learn discrete.
Patience through repetition....
Basic emotional stability...
Task oriented persistence...
All the while focused on the process

Do not ignore --.
The simple, master skill... patience --.
Rome wasn't built in one day --.
Patience.... patience...
Patience....
Over and over with practice.

And, **Chogyi Lodro** shares this quote and then shares some of his thoughts...
Those who do not milk failure for what they can learn from it squander a major opportunity.

From "Your Own Worst Enemy" by Kenneth W. Christian, Ph.D.

Depression from expectations: Today, May 19, 2005, has been an unusual day. Loud noise made by a big, stupid prisoner, awoke me early. Within one hour, I sank into the most depressive mood in years. Tears swell in my eyes, as I try to figure it out. Off and on, all day, I've gone up and down. However, during a conversation with a Buddhist friend, who spoke of his depressive day, he cited "expectations" as his problem. It struck me, I was feeling down and out because of unfounded expectations that I have had in the past couple weeks. Things between other prisoners and my self haven't progressed as "expected" and consequently I have suffered this depression.

Following is some liberating information from my Siddha yoga course that is very interesting....
Do not worry when you see someone who you might think is wrong... the trouble is in your mind... the Shakti is not making mistakes anywhere... the thing is a person might be wrong about something, but for some reason it is perfect that they see it that way... so we must practice seeing the perfection in everything. Even when our mind tells us that others imperfections are obvious... otherwise the judgmental tendencies are so powerful that they get totally out of hand. You must allow others to be right where they are knowing that that is their karma.... you don't have to

improve or correct any thing because that is only the height of egoism....Everything is perfect as it is.

Nothing can go wrong when you are established in the fact that the Shakti is everything. This is why you needn't be critical.... it is all just like it is for a reason... all you have to do is continue doing what you've been doing and work to do your best every day...

And the key is practice loving everything you see.

So far, nothing has been discovered that compares with the love and joy that arise spontaneously and naturally from the heart.

.....Herein, I would like to say that I want to write this message about

forgiveness, because I think it could help someone suffering.....

Forgiveness is one of the most important things in life. You have to forgive everyone for everything, without any exception. Forgive your whole past. Forgive yourself. Forgive everyone, including yourself, for everything that has happened up to now. Forgiveness is essential. Forgive yourself; forgive others; don't hold any resentment; don't hold any hard feelings; bury the hatchet in all cases, without exception. In of that all cases of "abuse" from the past, forgiveness is the key. Forgive everyone; this is the key to our own freedom. For all we know, they didn't even know what they were doing: forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Forgive yourself for anything you think you've done to harm anyone else, knowingly or unknowingly. And forgive everyone else for any way in which they hurt you, knowingly or unknowingly. Everything in the past has finished as soon as you let it go. At any point, we can surrender the pain – if we are sincere in our aspiration to do so.

This type of growth is what it is all about. I figured this is a Dharmic way to get over the past, the abuse, and the subsequent suffering.
Peace, love and happy trails, Chokyi Lodro .

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One of our Dharma Friends that Anna knows well and who is most remarkable, is scheduled to be executed at the end of this month. Please be thinking of him and praying that his death sentence will be lifted.