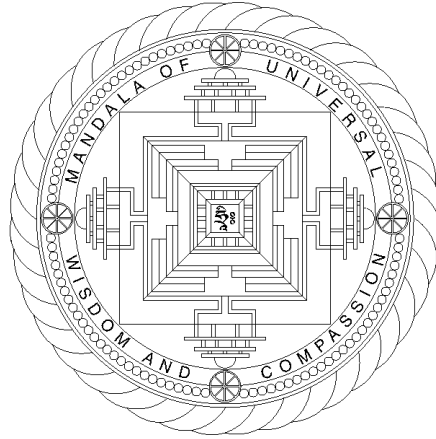


# Discovering BUDDHISM



*Awakening the limitless potential of your mind  
achieving all peace and happiness*

## **Subject Areas**

1. Mind and Its Potential
2. How to Meditate
3. Presenting the Path
4. The Spiritual Teacher
5. Death and Rebirth
6. All About Karma
7. Refuge in the Three Jewels
8. Establishing a Daily Practice
9. Samsara and Nirvana
10. How to Develop Bodhichitta
11. Transforming Problems
12. Wisdom of Emptiness
13. Introduction to Tantra
14. Special Integration Experiences

# 1. Mind and Its Potential

## DESCRIPTION

*Examine what is “mind,” its nature and function, and how it affects our experience of happiness and suffering. Come explore the differentiation between mind and brain, mind as the creator of our experiences, and the implications of possessing a mind that has no beginning and no end. In addition, learn methods to transform destructive thoughts and attitudes and create a positive and joyous mind.*

## TOPICS

- Nature of mind: clear and knowing
- Identifying Buddha-nature (our potential for enlightenment)
- Mind as a beginningless and endless continuity
- Mind is not the brain
- Mind is not created by a superior being or parents
- Mind as the source of happiness and suffering
- Techniques for changing the mind
- Precious human rebirth
- Introduction to disturbing emotions and how to transform them

## REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Meditation on continuity of mind
- Meditation on space-like clarity
- Meditation on the experience of mind as “knower”
- Meditation on precious human rebirth
- One-day practice intensive on the mind

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 1-3, 44-50)
- *Make Your Mind an Ocean*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Becoming Your Own Therapist*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Mind and Its Potential”

## SUGGESTED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

None

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *Open Heart, Clear Mind*, by Thubten Chodron
- *The Mind and its Functions*, Editions Rabten Choeling
- See *Example Course Outlines* of this subject area for more titles

## SUGGESTED VIDEOS

- *Heart of Tibet: An Intimate Profile of His Holiness the Dalai Lama*
- *Ethics for the New Millennium*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama

- *Overcoming Differences*, HHDL (SLP)

#### **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Mind and Its Potential*: Ven. Thubten Dhondrub
- *Mind: What is it?* Thubten Yeshe

#### **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            3-4
- Retreat                1 day
- Public Exams        2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

## 2. How to Meditate

### DESCRIPTION

*Basic meditation techniques. Learn the definition and purpose of meditation, how to sit properly, how to set up a meditation session, the different types of meditation techniques one may employ, and how to recognize and deal with obstacles to meditation.*

### TOPICS

- Importance of motivation and dedication
- Two kinds of meditation - analytical and placement
- Posture (7-pt.)
- Basic meditation techniques such as:
  - Watching the breath
  - Nine-round breathing
  - Shakyamuni, Tara, or Chenrezig visualization with mantra recitation
  - Meditation on the clear and knowing nature of mind
  - Precious human rebirth
  - Equanimity
  - Seed-syllable meditation
  - Four immeasurables or other meditations on compassion
- Recognizing and overcoming obstacles to meditation

### REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- See underlined meditations above
- One-day or one-weekend retreat using a selection of meditations from the above list.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 39-43)
- *How to Meditate*, by Kathleen Macdonald
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “How to Meditate”

### SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *Fine Arts of Relaxation, Concentration and Meditation*, Joel and Michel Levy (Wisdom Publications)
- *Mindfulness in Plain English*, by Henepola Gunaratana
- *Meditation for Life*, by Stephen Batchelor

### SUGGESTED VIDEOS

- *Secular Meditation*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *How to Meditate:* Ven. Kaye Miner
- *How to Meditate:* Ven. Sangye Khadro
- *How to Meditate:* Ven. Chonyi and Ven. Karin Valham (advanced material)

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            3-4
- Retreat                1-2 days
- Public Exams        2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

## 3. Presenting the Path

### DESCRIPTION

*Get an overview of the entire Tibetan Buddhist path to awakening. Hear about the life story of the Buddha and study the basic teachings of Buddhism. Discover the unique system for putting Buddhist philosophy into practice contained in the lam-rim, or “graduated path to enlightenment.”*

### TOPICS

- Life story of Lord Buddha
- Short history of Buddhism
- The correct way to listen to the teachings
- The stages of the path to enlightenment
  - Lower scope
  - Middle scope, including four noble truths
  - Higher scope

### REQUIRED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Analytical meditations on renunciation, bodhichitta, emptiness
- Memorize one short lam-rim prayer
- 3 day lam rim retreat, Lama Yeshe style

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 42-43)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 25–125) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 9-100)
- *Wisdom Energy*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Essence of Tibetan Buddhism*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Presenting the Path”

### SUGGESTED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Kopan-style lam-rim course (7-10 days)
- Review meditations on the stages of the path
- Meditations on the 4 noble truths

### SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *The Path to Enlightenment*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Virtue and Reality*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *The Principle Teachings of Buddhism*, Je Tsong Khapa
- *The Way to Freedom*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Awakening the Mind*, by Geshe Wangchen

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *Three Principal Paths*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*: Nick Ribush
- *Introduction to the Four Noble Truths*: Ven. Thubten Dhondrub
- *Essence of Buddhism*: Ven. Sangye Khadro
- *Putting Together a Lam-rim Meditation Course*: Ven. Karin Valham

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            6
- Retreat                3 days
- Public Exams        2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

## 4. The Spiritual Teacher

### DESCRIPTION

*Take the time to investigate the role of the teacher on the spiritual path: the need for a teacher, the qualities of a teacher, the qualities of a student, and how to relate to a teacher for greatest benefit in one's spiritual life.*

*Consider the challenges we face when thinking of entering into a "guru-disciple" relationship and learn how to overcome these skillfully.*

### TOPICS

- What is a spiritual teacher, lama, or guru?
- Why we need a teacher
- How to find one's teacher
- Qualifications of a teacher
- Criteria for a qualified disciple
- How to relate to the teacher – in general
  - According to the lam-rim
    - Advantages of proper devotion
    - Disadvantages of improper devotion
    - How to devote in thought and action
- What to do if things get difficult
- Importance of respecting all teachers both Tibetan and non-Tibetan

### REQUIRED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Meditation on the need for a spiritual teacher
- Meditation on the advantages and disadvantages of properly devoting oneself
- Meditation on devoting oneself in thought
- Shakyamuni Buddha Guru Yoga
- One day retreat using Shakyamuni Buddha Guru Yoga and meditations from above

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 251–306) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 217-69)
- *Relating to a Spiritual Teacher*, by Alex Berzin
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, "The Spiritual Teacher"

### SUGGESTED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Doing 100,000 migtsema retreat
- Doing 100,000 Samayavajra retreat

### SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *The Fulfillment of All Hopes*, by Je Tsong Khapa
- *The Life of Milarepa*, by Lobsang P. Lalungpa (or another life story)



- *The Life of Gompopa*, by Jampa Mackenzie Stewart
- *The Life of Marpa the Translator*
- *The Life and Teaching of Naropa*, by Herbert V. Guenther
- *Enlightened Beings*, by Jan Willis
- *The Fourteen Dalai Lamas*, by Glenn Mullin
- *Fifty Stanzas on the Spiritual Teacher*, by Aryashura

### **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *Guru Devotion and Refuge*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

### **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Relating to the Spiritual Teacher*: Kendall Magnussen

### **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            3-4
- Retreat                1 day
- Public Exams        2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 5. Death and Rebirth

## DESCRIPTION

*Explore the process of death and rebirth and its impact on how we live our lives. Be guided in skillful reflection on the meaning of death and what to expect at the death-time. In this way, fulfill your purpose in life, resolve conflicts, and develop the skills to help both yourself and others at the time of death. Eventually, through Buddhist practice, one can overcome death altogether.*

## TOPICS

- Disadvantages of not thinking about death, 8 worldly concerns
- Advantages of thinking about death
- Nine-part meditation on death
- Eight stages of death process
- Process of rebirth
  - The sufferings of the lower realms, something to be avoided!
- The role of karma in determining rebirth
- Six realms
- How to help the dying
- Subtle and gross impermanence
- Dharma is the long term solution to death

## REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Nine-point meditation on death
- Meditation on your own death
- Meditations on impermanence
- Weekend retreat on death and impermanence

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 50-59)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 332–93) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 294-321)
- *Advice on Dying and Living a Better Life*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Death and Rebirth”

## SUGGESTED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Meditation on the eight stages of the death process
- Meditation on continuity of mind
- Meditation on the sufferings of the lower realms
- Medicine Buddha practice
- Animal liberation
- Practice the charity of writing your will
- Become familiar with the “Hope Packet” of FPMT Education Dept.

## **SUGGESTED TEXTS**

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *Death, Intermeditate State, and Reibth*, by Lati Rinpoche and Jeffrey Hopkins
- *Reincarnation, the Boy Lama*, by Vickie Mackenzie
- *Reborn in the West*, by Vicki MacKenzie
- *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment Vol 1*, by Tsong Khapa (pp 143-160)

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *The Tibetan Book of the Dead - Part one: A way of Life* (WinStar and Wellspring Media)
- “ “ “ “ *Part two: the Great Liberation*

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Death According to the Lam-rim*: Kendall Magnussen & Andrea Antonietti
- *Preparing for Death and Helping the Dying*: Ven. Sangye Khadro

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup> 4
- Retreat 2 days
- Public Exams 2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

## 6. All About Karma

### DESCRIPTION

*Learn the essential facts about the law of cause and effect and generate a clear understanding about how karma works. Discover effective tools to accumulate merit - the cause of happiness and success - and purify mistaken actions done in the past. In addition, explore ways to become adept at dealing with life most effectively and thereby take control of your future.*

### TOPICS

- Four principles of karma
- Ten non-virtues and their results
- Four parts of a karmic deed
- The practice of rejoicing
- Importance of motivation
- Four opponent powers and their relation to the four kinds of karmic results
- The six methods for purification
- How to make every action meaningful
- Importance of accumulation of merit and purification
- Merit as the source for all happiness, success, and realizations
  - Importance of practicing patience since anger destroys all merit

### REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Meditation on rejoicing
- Vajrasattva practice with 4 opponent powers
- Prostrations to the thirty-five Confession Buddhas with 4 opponent powers
- Meditation on the disadvantages of anger
- Weekend Vajrasattva retreat with prostrations to the 35 Confession Buddhas

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 76-83)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 430–70) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 386-423)
- *Healing Anger*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “All About Karma”

### SUGGESTED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Meditation on one’s current habits of mind
- Nyung Ne
- 8 Mahayana Precepts
- LZR’s self-evaluation book
- Vajrasattva preliminary practice

## **SUGGESTED TEXTS**

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *A Short Vajrasattva Practice*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Making Life Meaningful*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- Extracts from *Becoming Vajrasattva*, by Lama Yeshe
- Extracts from *Teachings from the Vajrasattva Retreat*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *Ethics for the New Millennium*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Arising from the Flames: Overcoming Anger through Patience*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Overview of Karma*: Ven. Kaye Miner
- *Purification and the Four Opponent Powers* Ven. Karin Valham

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            4-5
- Retreat            2 days
- Public Exams       2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 7. Refuge in the Three Jewels

## DESCRIPTION

*Get informed about what it means to take refuge in the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), and the essential practices of refuge. Find out more about the advantage of taking lay vows and their role in enhancing our spiritual growth.*

## TOPICS

- Reasons for going for refuge
- Valid refuge objects
- Qualities of the Three Jewels (ultimate and relative Three Jewels)
- Measure of having gone for refuge
- Causal and resultant refuge
- Benefits of having gone for refuge
- Refuge commitments
- What the five lay vows are and the benefits of taking them
- Introduction to refuge preliminary practice

## REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha & mantra
- Analytical meditation on Refuge
- Weekend retreat on refuge preliminary practice using Shakyamuni Buddha Guru Yoga

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-Fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 69-75)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 394–428) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 352-84)
- *Taking Refuge in the Three Jewels* booklet (FPMT)
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Refuge in the Three Jewels”

## SUGGESTED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Making tsa-tsas of Lord Buddha
- Prostrations
- Concentration meditation on Lord Buddha
- Refuge ceremony
- Refuge preliminary practice

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *Old Path, White Clouds*, by Thich Nhat Hanh

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *On Buddhism*, by Robert Thurman (Mystic Fire Video)
- *Guru Devotion and Refuge*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Basics of Refuge* – reference material only, prepared by Silvia Wetzel
- *All About Refuge* – Ven. Connie Miller

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            4
- Retreat            2 days
- Public Exams       2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

## 8. Establishing a Daily Practice

### DESCRIPTION

*Assemble the tools you need to develop a successful daily practice. Using Lama Zopa Rinpoche's A DAILY MEDITATION PRACTICE as a guide, become familiar with the elements necessary to generate realizations in the mind. Also, receive some tips for making every action of the day meaningful.*

### TOPICS

- Lama Zopa Rinpoche's instructions on everyday Dharma
- How to go to sleep, wake up, eat, walk, etc.
- Six preliminaries
  - Cleaning the place, etc.
  - Includes detailed explanation on how to set up an altar
  - Includes detailed explanation on how to do refuge, seven-limbed prayer, mandala offering, and requests
- Four immeasurable thoughts
- Lama Zopa Rinpoche's *A Daily Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha*
- How to do prostrations to the thirty-five Confession Buddhas
- How to do Vajrasattva meditation with four opponent powers
- Benefits of living in vows and how to take the Eight Mahayana Precepts
- Importance of daily purification, daily rejoicing
- Importance of accumulation of merit and purification for success in one's spiritual life

### REQUIRED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- *A Daily Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha*
- Taking Eight Mahayana Precepts for one day
- Weekend retreat with precepts, prostrations, *A Daily Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha*, lam-rim

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 10-38, 136-140)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 129-247 & 307-32) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 103-213 & 270-87)
- *Making Life Meaningful*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *A Daily Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, "Establishing a Daily Practice"

### SUGGESTED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- 7-10 day lam-rim intensive, Kopan-style or using *A Daily Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha* as with weekend retreat
- Mandala offering or prostrations preliminary practices
- LZR's self-evaluation book



- Identifying and avoiding eight worldly concerns

### **SUGGESTED TEXTS**

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *The Direct and Unmistaken Method*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Essential Buddhist Prayers: An FPMT Prayer Book, Volume One, Basic Prayers and Practices*
- *A Short Vajrasattva Practice*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Lam-rim Outlines*, by Ven. Karin Valham
- *The Essential Nectar*, by Geshe Rabten
- *Meditations on the Path to Enlightenment*, by Geshe Acharya Thubten Lodan
- *Transforming Adversity into Joy and Courage*, by Geshe Jampa Tegchok

### **SUGGESTED VIDEOS/TAPES OR CDS**

- *Guided Lam-rim Meditations*, by Ven. Karin Valham (Kopan Monastery, tapes)
- *Guided Lam-rim Meditations*, by Ven. Thubten Chodron (CDs)

### **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *A Daily Meditation Practice*: Ven. Karin Valham
- *Lam-rim Meditation Practice*: Ven. Tenzin Tsapel
- *Establishing a Daily Meditation Practice*: John Feuille (?)

### **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>                    6
- Retreat                      2 days
- Public Exams              2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

## 9. Samsara and Nirvana

### DESCRIPTION

*Investigate what “samsara” is and how we are stuck in it. Find out what “nirvana” is and how to achieve it. Develop the determination to be free from suffering and empower yourself with practical tools to deal with and eliminate disturbing emotions forever.*

### TOPICS

- Wheel of life/ 12 links
- Sufferings
  - The three sufferings, six, eight, etc.
- The meaning of renunciation
- Causes of suffering
  - Karma
  - Six root delusions
- Recognizing and dealing with delusions
- 4 Noble Truths
- Three higher trainings
- Definitions and difference between “Nirvana” and “Enlightenment”

### REQUIRED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Meditations on the sufferings of samsara
- Meditations on the six root delusions and their antidotes
- Weekend retreat doing meditations on sufferings of samsara (8, 6, and 3), and/or identifying the root delusions and applying their antidotes

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 84-105)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand, 1997 gold edition* (pp. 473–543) or *2006 blue edition* (pp. 427-95)
- *The Meaning of Life*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Samsara and Nirvana”

### SUGGESTED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Instructions and practice in generating calm-abiding
- Practices for mindfulness
- Mandala offerings or prostrations preliminary practice

### SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *The Four Noble Truths*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *The Four Noble Truths*, by Ven. Lobsang Gyatso
- *Mind and Mental Factors*, Lama Thubten Yeshe

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *Four Noble Truths*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Peace: A Goal of All Religions*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Meridian Trust)

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *The Meaning of Life*: John Feuille and Ven. Siliana Bosa
- *Transforming Disturbing Emotions*: Ven. Sangye Khadro and Ven. Carolyn Lawler

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            4-6
- Retreat                2 days
- Public Exams        2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 10. How to Develop Bodhichitta

## DESCRIPTION

*Come discover the clear meditation instruction available in Tibetan Buddhism that enables us to develop our innate qualities of loving kindness and compassion. Become skilled at applying these techniques to generate the mind of bodhichitta, the wish to attain enlightenment for the benefit of others, known to be the heart of Buddha's teachings.*

## TOPICS

- Equanimity
- Benefits of bodhichitta
- The three methods for developing bodhichitta
  - Six causes and one result
  - Exchanging self for others
  - Eleven steps
- The six perfections
- Brief explanation of the bodhisattva vows and benefits of taking them

## REQUIRED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Meditations on Equanimity
- Meditations on the Eleven steps to generate Bodhichitta
- Meditation on Chenrezig with mantra recitation
- Animal liberation practice
- Weekend retreat on Bodhichitta using Chenrezig guru yoga method

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 106-119, 143-187)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand, 1997 gold edition* (pp. 547–89, 626–46) or *2006 blue edition* (pp. 499-537 & 573-92)
- *A Short Practice of Four-Arm Chenrezig*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “How to Develop Bodhichitta”

## SUGGESTED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- LZR self-evaluation book
- Nyung Ne retreats
- 100,000 mani retreat using lam-rim meditations on bodhichitta
- Service to others

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *Virtue and Reality*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *The Bodhisattva Vows*, FPMT Education Department booklet

- *The Joy of Living and Dying in Peace*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama (six perfections)
- *How to Develop Bodhichitta*, by Ribur Rinpoche (Amitabha Buddhist Center)
- *The Six Perfections*, by Geshe Sonam Rinchen

#### **SUGGESTED VIDEOS/TAPES**

- *Arising from the Flames: Overcoming Anger through Patience*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama

#### **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *How to Develop Bodhichitta*: John Feuille
- *Thirty-seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*: Nick Ribush
- *Six Perfections* (Kadampa Center?)

#### **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>                    6
- Retreat                        2 days
- Public Exams                2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 11. Transforming Problems

## DESCRIPTION

Consider well the disadvantages of self-cherishing and the advantages of cherishing others more than ourselves. Get inspired to “exchange yourself with others,” and then be guided in how to employ the special techniques of mind training or “lo-jong” as a means to transform problems into happiness and learn to like problems as much as ice cream!

## TOPICS

- Eight worldly concerns
- Equanimity
- Shortcomings of anger and desire
- Transforming Problems into the path
- Experiencing problems for others
- Taking happiness as the path to enlightenment

## REQUIRED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Meditations on transforming happiness and problems into the path
- Meditation on tong-len
- Memorize 8 verses of Thought Transformation
- Weekend retreat or longer on tong-len using Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s *Everflowing Nectar of Bodhichitta*

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun* (pp. 106-110, 114-142)
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 589–625) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 537-72)
- *Transforming Problems into Happiness*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Transforming the Mind*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Everflowing Nectar of Bodhichitta*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche (FPMT)
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Transforming Problems”

## SUGGESTED INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES

- Dorje Khadro preliminary practice
- Tsa tsa preliminary practice

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *The Door to Satisfaction*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Peacock in the Poison Grove*, by Geshe Lhundub Sopa
- *Awakening the Mind, Lightening the Heart*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend*, by Geshe Rabten
- *Becoming a Child of the Buddhas*, by Gomo Tulku

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *Lojong: Transforming the Mind*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Peace through Human Understanding*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Meridian Trust)
- *Transforming Your Mind by Practicing Dharma*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *The Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Transforming Problems*: Ven. Tenzin Tsapel and Dieter Kratzer

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            4
- Retreat            2 days
- Public Exams      2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 12. Wisdom of Emptiness

## **DESCRIPTION**

*The realization of emptiness is crucial for the attainment of liberation and enlightenment. Take this opportunity to enhance your ability to bring about this realization. Learn how to develop calm abiding and different methods to use in meditation on emptiness. Practice accumulation of merit and purification of obstacles - indispensable for generating realizations within the mind.*

## **TOPICS**

- Misunderstandings about emptiness
- Avoiding the two extremes
- Necessity for accumulation of merit and purification
- Prasangika presentation of emptiness
- Lama Tsong Khapa's presentation of the three levels of dependent arising
  - Causes and conditions
  - Parts
  - Imputation by mind; mere label
- How to meditate on emptiness
  - Developing calm-abiding
  - Dependent arising
  - Fourfold reasoning
  - Space-like emptiness
  - Other methods
- Three higher trainings

## **REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES**

- Meditation on calm abiding
- Meditations on emptiness
- Recitation of Heart Sutra
- Light offering practice
- Weekend retreat on Heart Sutra according to Lama Zopa's Rinpoche's advice

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- *Virtue and Reality*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 647–706) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 593-648)
- *Heart Sutra: An Oral Teaching*, by Geshe Sonam Rinchen
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, "Wisdom of Emptiness"

## **SUGGESTED INTEGRATION PRACTICES**

- Prostrations to the thirty-five Confession Buddhas
- Water bowl offering preliminary practice



## **SUGGESTED TEXTS**

- *Spiritual Friends: Meditations by Monks and Nuns of the International Mahayana Institute*
- *Teachings from the Vajrasattva Retreat*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche (extracts)
- *Echoes of Voidness*, by Geshe Rabten
- *Calm the Mind*, by Gen Lamrimpa (SLP)
- *Realizing Emptiness*, by Gen Lamrimpa
- *The Buddhism of Tibet*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Chandrakirti's Sevenfold Reasoning*, by Joe Wilson
- *Emptiness Yoga*, by Jeffrey Hopkins
- *The Essence of the Heart Sutra*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *In the Spirit of Manjushri: The Wisdom Teachings of Buddhism*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Emptiness Explained*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Emptiness and Dependent Arising*: Tubten Pende
- *Developing Calm Abiding*: To be developed

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>            5
- Retreat            2 days
- Public Exams      2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A "session" is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 13. Introduction to Tantra

## DESCRIPTION

*Learn the definition of tantra, how tantra works and why it is a powerful form of practice. Get a broad overview of the four classes of tantra and learn how to practice simple Kriya tantric methods. In addition, find out how to integrate the practices of tantra with lam-rim meditation for optimal results.*

## TOPICS

- Review general teachings on guru devotion
- Foundation of success in tantra is 3 principle paths
- Explanation of tantra
  - Differences between sutra and tantra
  - Deity yoga
  - Four levels
  - Two stages
  - Preliminary practices – overview and purpose
  - How to do deity retreats with lam-rim

## REQUIRED INTEGRATION PRACTICES

- Meditation on deity yoga: Chenrezig, Tara, and/or Manjushri
- One-week deity retreat with meditation on lam-rim

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Introduction to Tantra*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, 1997 gold edition (pp. 707–8) or 2006 blue edition (pp. 649-50)
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Introduction to Tantra”

## SUGGESTED INTGEGRATION PRACTICES

- Prostrations to the thirty-five Confession Buddhas and other preliminaries
- One weekend retreat with nine sessions doing each of the nine preliminaries
- Initiations, retreats, and commentaries of different Kriya tantra practices
- Nyung-ne
- Samayavajra preliminary practice
- Guru yoga preliminary practice

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *The Tantric Distinction*, by Jeffrey Hopkins
- *Essence of Tibetan Buddhism*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Tantra in Tibet*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- *Becoming the Compassion Buddha*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS**

- *Introduction to Tantra*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Three Principle Paths*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe

## **SAMPLE COURSES**

- *Introduction to Tantra*: Thubten Yeshe

## **ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED TO OFFER THIS COURSE:**

- Sessions<sup>1</sup>                    3-4
- Retreat                      2 days
- Public Exams            2-4 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Sessions should be formatted to include lectures on the required topics, discussion groups or question and answer, and guided meditations that introduce students to the required meditations for the course. Other sessions should be scheduled for doing public exams and/or teacher interviews. The estimated number of sessions referred to above does NOT include the time needed for retreat or practice-intensive requirements. A “session” is one 1 ½- to 2- hour class. Students should also budget personal time to do the required reading assignments.

# 14. Special Integration Experiences

## DESCRIPTION

*By undertaking intensive practices of purification and a minimum two-week lam-rim residential retreat, prepare your mind in the best possible way to gain realizations on the path to enlightenment. Purification practices include: 100,000 prostrations, 3-month Vajrasattva retreat, and Nyung Ne. This is a great way to seal the blessings of this program.*

## REQUIRED

- Two-week Kopan-style Lam-rim course
- Three-month Vajrasattva purification retreat
- 100,000 Prostrations to the 35 Buddhas
- Nyung Ne Retreat – do, Know how to do, Able to lead others to do

## HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

- Kopan one-month course (at Kopan Monastery, Nepal, fulfills requirement)
- Making pilgrimage to Buddhist holy sites<sup>1</sup>
- Meeting a qualified spiritual master
- Participation in an “Experiencing Monasticism” residential course (*To be developed in conjunction with the International Mahayana Institute*)

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Becoming Vajrasattva*, by Lama Thubten Yeshe
- *Everlasting Rain of Nectar*, by Geshe Jhampa Gyatso (on prostration practice)
- *The Preliminary Practice of Vajrasattva*, (FPMT)
- *The Preliminary Practice of Prostrations to the Thirty-Five Confession Buddhas*, (FPMT)
- *Discovering Buddhism Required Reading*, “Special Integration Experiences”

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

- *Teachings from the Vajrasattva Retreat*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- *Confession of Downfalls*, by Brian Beresford
- *Relating to a Spiritual Teacher*, by Alex Berzin

## ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE

- 3 Nyung Nes (2 days each = 6-9 days)
- Prostrations (2-3 months full-time retreat or 200-300/day for 1-2 years)
- 2-week lam-rim course (Lam-rim teachings and meditations can be combined with Vajrasattva retreat. Preferably done as separate course.)
- Vajrasattva retreat (2-3 months full-time retreat or 6-9 months doing two sessions/day)

---

<sup>1</sup> Pilgrimage can be done in a modified way by creating replicas of the Buddhist Holy Sites in one’s home or center, reading about each place and doing the appropriate practices as if one were actually at these places in India and Nepal.

Your suggestions for the *Discovering Buddhism* program are most welcome. For more information or to make comments, please contact:

FPMT Education Department  
1632 SE 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, OR 97214-4702  
503.808.1588  
[education@fpmt.org](mailto:education@fpmt.org)

Thank you.