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This is the first newsletter in the new online format. It has taken many months to change old patterns of production but the happy results will be apparent and lasting.

Buddhism for mothers and carers of young children

by Kate Walker

This group meets fortnightly at the MBC on Thursday mornings at 9:30am. We explore how to practise Buddhism and meditation with young children. Our approach is mindful, flexible and open, with much assistance from Sudaya. Our meetings are evolving and fluid in structure. We try to read a chapter from *Buddhism for Mothers* by Sarah Naphali or other readings before coming along. On other days, making the journey to the session in between sleep times and juggling other needs is all the preparation necessary. While settling in for the morning we share tea and toys and discuss how the Buddhist teachings apply to our family lives. We then sit in the shrine room, while the children sit, play, chat, and explore the space around us as we try to remain mindful of whatever happens Our small, diverse group is open to new members. Contact the Centre to find out more about our meetings.

Collaboration with Airstrip

The new MBC website, including the coding, the logo and other materials, have involved consultation and liaison over many months; they have been patiently developed with Melbourne-based company Airstrip. Airstrip is an art and design company offering bespoke design services to small businesses in particular, including Web design, Origami, Art, Print, and Code. Have a look at the Airstrip website: see <http://www.airstrip.com.au/>.

Many thanks to Danny Kneebone, Matthew Gardiner and My Trinh Gardiner for their creativity and careful, hard work in support of this MBC initiative.

And another thing ...

by Jivita

How to get other people to do what you want (without having to pay them). That is what we all want, isn't it? That is what we need magic wands for. We require the people around us to put at least some effort into providing us with physical, intellectual and emotional sustenance. The fact that we are so often in bad humour is supposedly testament to how lax other people are about stepping up with the goods when our cups of desire are held out for a refill. The sangha is a network of friends all trying, to various degrees, to develop into wiser and kinder human beings through practising the Dharma together. So, should we demand satisfactory customer service from them as well? Should we be requiring them to fulfil our wants and needs and feel aggrieved when they cannot or will not do so? Or should we try a different approach? The Buddha had a few ideas here. We could try using the first three precepts as a starting point to our dealing with others in the sangha. We could engage with our fellow dharma-farers in the letter and the spirit of deeds of loving-kindness, open-handed generosity and stillness, simplicity and contentment. In this way our perspective might begin to change from a utilitarian 'what's in it for me?' attitude to a more heartfelt attitude of 'what can I do for others?'. I will leave it for you to consider. Oh, and if you want someone to practise loving-kindness and open-hearted generosity on, I am willing to be a guinea pig.

Poem

The meaning of existence

Everything except language
knows the meaning of existence.
Trees, planets, rivers, time,
know nothing else. They express it
moment by moment as the universe.

Even this fool of a body
lives it in part, and would
have full dignity within it
but for the ignorant freedom
of my talking mind.

News

Two new mitras on Buddha day

On 9 May Jen Grant and Anke Kietz were welcomed into the mitra sangha.



At the end of a festive day spent celebrating the Buddha's Enlightenment, they became mitras in a sevenfold puja led

Les Murray
from *New Collected Poems* (Carcenet, 2003)



by Sudaya.

Three women prepare for ordination

Kath Dubout, Glyniss Cree and Lea Richardson have been invited to attend this year's womens ordination retreat in

New Zealand. Glyniss and Kath are from the Dandenong Ranges Buddhist community, while Lea is a familiar face around the Melbourne Centre. Our congratulations and best wishes go with them for their retreat in September.



Dharma quote

This is taken from the talk given by Sudaya on Buddha Day, celebrating the Buddha's Enlightenment.

'The Buddha Shakyamuni was a man, a human being. But he became Enlightened: one who was the living embodiment of these three characteristics: perfect knowledge, unbounded love and compassion, and imperturbable equanimity. Remember he was not born that way. He became Enlightened as a result of his own human effort to make actual what was potential in him, to develop to the full his potential as a human being, a potential we all share.'

Send any news items or images you can offer to news@melbournebuddhistcentre.org for inclusion in the next newsletter.

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