

Sat Chit Anand

From: "Sat Chit Anand" <satchitanand@global.co.za>
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Tribute to His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Who celebrated his 75th birthday last week.

You bring hope, love and compassion to all, harmony among religions and races, and are a divine inspiration to the world. May your voice of harmony, spirit of compassion, and ocean of wisdom embrace the universe till the end of time. [From poem composed in his honour.]

We all have Buddha nature. Everybody has the potential to become a Buddha. Everybody has the seed of enlightenment. Everybody has it as an inherent natural quality, but you have to actualize your own potential and transform your mind.

If you change your mind, if you transform your mind, your other behavior will also change, such as the way you speak and act. Our speech should be kind and meaningful, and our actions should be kind and gentle. Virtuous actions help others and non-virtuous actions harm others and yourself. Dharma practice is changing / transforming our negative ways into positive ways. Actions may be mental, verbal or physical. Mental actions are the most important because they form the base of verbal and physical actions. Our mind can be developed limitlessly, whereas verbal and physical actions have limitations. Our subtle mind goes from one lifetime to another, which is why it is so important to develop the mind. There are many methods and techniques to train and transform our minds.

Negative emotions are destructive – they harm your own mind and they harm others. Negative emotions cause suffering. We all want happiness and peace and this is why we must train our mind so we can bring about the causes and conditions for happiness. We train our mind in order to benefit ourselves and others. It is this very mind filled with afflictions that is transformed into an enlightened mind. By practice and effort, our minds gradually become more and more pure. Still we get discouraged and think it is too difficult. When we are beginners it is very difficult, but as we get more accomplished and our practice gets stronger, it gets easier. In the beginning, much effort is needed to transform our negative habits. Gradually, we develop better habits and less effort is needed.

If you have confidence in doing good deeds, you will accomplish a lot in your life. If you have confidence in your abilities and in your practice, you will be determined to gain victory over afflictive emotions, and you will not be controlled by them. Do not allow yourself to be controlled by afflictive emotions. Right effort never gives up. It is based on the understanding that we all have Buddha nature, clear light mind, which is pure. This mind is temporarily obscured by mental afflictions. If we accept this, then we will accept that enlightenment is possible for everyone. It just takes a long time to purify our minds. If we

know this, we won't get discouraged so easily.

We are controlled by the mind and the mind is controlled by afflictive emotions. We can learn to control the mind so that it is no longer controlled by afflictive emotions. Learn to place your mind where you choose to place it and learn to keep it there, so that it does not get distracted. Learn to keep your mind on the chosen object, whether this be the breath, a prayer or mantra etc, one-pointedly. With practice, your mind will become less easily distracted. The trained mind retains control and is not overpowered by afflictive emotions.

Another way of training the mind is to practice cultivating virtuous qualities. Dark and light; dry and wet; cold and hot cannot exist simultaneously. In order to reduce or eliminate one, you must apply the other as an antidote. If you switch on the light, darkness disappears. If you apply moisture, dryness will disappear. If you put the heater on, the cold will disappear. Apply these same techniques to the mind. If you have anger and hatred, cultivate loving-kindness and compassion. Strengthen the antidote until it is stronger than the problem. As one increases in strength, the other will decrease proportionately. It is important to habituate your mind with new ways of thinking so that some transformation can take place within your mind. Practices such as developing loving-kindness and compassion help to change the mind. If you practice correctly, this should happen. Your mind will become more peaceful and joyful.

Buddhism is a way of life – be compassionate and non-violent – because everything, the inner and the outer, are interconnected and interdependent. These qualities are greatly needed and appreciated today. People are becoming interested in the internal functioning of the mind, and more and more people will become interested in Buddhist philosophy in the 21st century. If you know how important it is to train and transform your mind, which is so emphasized in Buddhism, you can study this and then apply it to your own religion. People from all religions can study and benefit from Buddhist teachings. Through training our minds we can become more peaceful. This will give us greater opportunities for creating peaceful families and human communities that are the foundation of world peace.

From my notes during Annual Public Teachings by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Mind Training, Dharamsala, India 2003

Spiritual Teachings

Thursday evenings: 19h00 - 21h00

Cost: by donation

A NEW EARTH: DVDs with Eckhart Tolle and Oprah

This week: THE PAIN BODY

The secret of happiness is being one with life. Life is the dancer and you are the dance. Life is dancing the dance of form. The one life permeates everything. There is no separation. But the ego separates itself from what the Buddha called the "suchness of life". This separation creates unhappiness and suffering. To create suffering without recognizing it is the essence of unconscious living and being totally in the grip of the ego. To end the misery that has afflicted the human condition for 1000's of years, you have to start with yourself and take responsibility for your inner state at any given moment ...

Mindful Hatha Yoga

Tuesday evenings: 18h00 - 19h30

Wednesday afternoons: 16h30 - 18h00

Cost: R50 per class

When in Plett you are welcome to join our yoga classes. It is always lovely to have visitors / friends from out of town join us. Thanks for your presence: Victor, Linda from the Mindfulness Institute, and Nina, editor of Yoga Awakening Africa, a quarterly SA yoga magazine. Nina and her team maintain an informative website and monthly newsletter with great yoga articles and notices of country-wide events. See www.yogaaa.co.za or subscribe to their monthly newsletters at <http://www.yogaaa.co.za/newsletterblog.html>. To read article by Nina on her visit to our Yoga Studio, see:



Studio News

Studio updates July 2010

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Reciting OM MANI PADME HUM, the Mantra of Compassion, at prayer wheels, Dharamsala India 2003

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