The Gay Buddhist Fellowship supports Buddhist practice in the Gay men’s community. It is a forum that brings together the diverse Buddhist traditions to address the spiritual concerns of Gay men in the Bay Area, the United States, and the world. GBF’s mission includes cultivating a social environment that is inclusive and caring.

The Practice of Deep Intimacy
*First Annual GBF Spring Retreat, March 3–5*

GBF members gathered at Pema Osel Ling, a Tibetan Buddhist Retreat Center of the Vajrayana Foundation, in the Santa Cruz mountains, for two days of sunshine and rain, noble silence and intimate comradeship, sitting and walking, chanting and Sufi dancing. Dharma talks were given by Jim Wilson and Tulku Thubten Rinpoche of Pema Osel Ling. Dharma Daddy was also in attendance and offered a question-and-answer session.
GBF Committees
We always welcome and need interested participants, so please, JOIN US! Call the contact person on the committee, or talk to him (or anyone on that committee) at a GBF sitting or event. This is a great practice opportunity!

Steering Committee
Call 415.974.9878
Marty Cole                Clint Seiter
Hal Hershey               Terry Stein
David Holmes             Don Wiepert
Ding Hao Ma

Newsletter Committee
Hal Hershey               Tom Hurley
Editor                    Editorial Consultant
510.527.7472
halburt@aol.com           Francis Gates,
Larry Hermsen             Nonprofit Mail
Art Director               Snake Woolington
Robin Levitt               Mailing Party
Mailing List

Website Committee
Joe Kukulka, Contact
webmaster@gaybuddhist.org

Hamilton House
Clint Seiter, Contact
415.386.3088

Sunday Sitting Facilitators
Marty Cole
Call 415.974.9878

The following committees are currently without chairs:
Development Committee
Social Committee
Practice Committee

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us at 415.974.9878.

GBF Spring Retreat 2000

The First Year in Review
(from the September 3, 1992 issue of The Gay Buddhist Fraternity [sic] Newsletter)

It was in the mercifully rainy Fall and Winter of 1991 that a small group of Bay Area guys met and talked about starting a Buddhist club for gay men. The idea had been attempted at least once before, many years ago on Hartford Street in the Castro, and that group had over time evolved and redefined itself as Issan-ji, the Hartford Street Zen Center. Under the loving guidance of Issan Dorsey-sensei, HSZC blossomed as a center for Soto Zen practice in the heart of the gay ghetto and plunged head-on into the AIDS crisis with its Maitri Hospice.

But last year many men simultaneously became aware of a desire for a non-sectarian, pan-Buddhist fraternity to bring together gay men with new and, as of that point, unformulated goals and needs.

This new Gay Buddhist Fraternity began to meet informally twice a month and then blossomed chaotically, quickly outgrowing both the originators’ expectations and capacities. By Spring, the GBF was able to hold its first weekend retreat at the wonderful new Tibetan Dharma center, Pema Osel Ling. With the
The Lojong Teachings
by David Richo, PhD

Everyone is an appreciated friend when we follow the Lojong teachings, eight verses designed in the twelfth century by Geshe Langri Tangpa to summarize Buddhist concepts. They can be found in a booklet by the Dalai Lama called Training the Mind (Wisdom, 1999). The central point of these skillful means for letting go of ego is in this verse: “Whenever others revile and treat me in other unjust ways, may I accept this defeat myself, and offer the victory to others.” By cultivating compassion and by dissolving the illusion of an independent self, it becomes possible to love in such a humble way. The implications of this exalted teaching for intimate relating are clear once we realize that love is other-centered. It is without hierarchy or insistence on individual autonomy. It does not cherish self-vindication. To see that leads to freedom from separateness. There is indeed an “I am” but without the conceptual limits with which we have surrounded it. “I am not a separate entity” means I am not limited by time or space. This is the real meaning of “no me.” Limitation happens when we identify with any layer of ego.

Here is a summary of the eight verses of Lojong as a practice of affirmations that apply to relating egolessly:

May I consider all beings precious.
May I always respect others as superior while maintaining self-esteem.
May I face my inner darkness and turn it to good.
May I be moved with compassion for the pain behind the spite others may show me.

When I am hurt by others, may I forego retaliation while always fighting injustice.
May I reckon those who betray me as sacred teachers.
I offer joy to all beings and secretly take on their suffering.
May all beings and I be free from ego concerns of loss and gain.

Our healthy self-esteem can increase as we look at ourselves mindfully. We do this by seeing ourselves just as we are:

I look at myself and my life without fear of what I may see or what I may find I have to work on.
I look at myself without censure, blame, or shame but with a sense of accountability for any ways I have hurt others and I make amends.
I accept myself as I am without an attachment to fixing, changing, or controlling my natural inclinations and attributes.
I let go of any attachment to the outcome of what is happening in my life right now or for the future.
I allow myself to live in accord with my deepest needs and wishes.
I love myself as I am and take care of myself.
I pay attention to my body and what it tells me about myself and the joys and stresses of my circumstances.
I am free of fear and craving.
I share with others the gifts I receive and am thankful.
May all beings have happiness because of my work, my gifts, and my practice.

When I see I am nothing, that is wisdom. When I see I am everything, that is love. My life is a movement between these two.

— Nisargadatta Maharaj
Local Dharma Centers
A list of local Dharma centers is available on our website and as a handout at our Sunday sittings. We encourage members to explore what these Dharma centers can offer to their practice.

Meditation Group in Sonoma County
A Buddhist meditation group meets near the town of Sonoma every other Wednesday evening starting at 7pm, and GBFers are always welcome. The group now has gay and nongay practitioners. For more information, contact Bob Hass, 707.938.8868.

Ongoing Meditation Group On Monday Nights
Led by Jon Bernie, a meditation teacher in San Francisco with thirty years’ meditation experience (including eleven years of Zen Buddhist training and seven years of Vipassana training). The group is free and open to all; donations gratefully accepted. Quaker Meeting House, 65 9th Street (between Mission & Market), 7–9pm. For more information, call Jon at 415.621.7314.

Room for Rent
I am looking for a person to rent a large (12 by 25) room, shared kitchen, bath, laundry, in a b e e y o o - t i f u l house with a stunning view on the top of King’s Mountain in Woodside, surrounded by parklands and hiking trails. Forty minutes from SF. $795 per month. For quiet, spiritual, friendly, non-smoker. Call David Holmes at 650-529-1924. Available May first.

Local Dharma
April 2000 San Francisco/Bay Area Events

Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Fridays, 10:30am: HIV Sitting Group. Hartford Street Zen Center, 57 Hartford St, SF. Information 415.863.2507.

Sundays, 3–5pm: “Buddhism for Gay Men.” Gay Men’s Buddhist Sangha. A 20-minute meditation followed by a presentation of the core teachings of the Buddha, designed specifically for the Gay community. New Leaf Center, 1874 Market St, SF. Information 415.207.8113

Thursdays, 12:30pm–1:30pm: Mindfulness Meditation for People Living with Chronic or Life-Threatening Illness. Instruction, practice, talk led by Eugene Cash and Frank Ostaseski. Zen Hospice Project. Information 415.285.7502.

Saturday, April 8, 10am: Dharma Talk by Zenshin Philip Whalen, Abbot. Hartford St Zen Center, SF. Information 415.863.2507.

Saturday, April 8 and Sunday, April 9, 9am–3pm: “Facing Death Together—Being a Compassionate Companion.” A mindful and compassionate approach to the practical, emotional, and spiritual issues which are inherent in this unique relationship. Frank Ostaseski and guest teachers. Fee: $150. Zen Hospice Project, 273 Page St, SF. Information 415.863.2910.


Sunday, April 16, 9–4:30pm: One Day Sitting. Planned especially for new students and those who wish to participate in a gendered schedule. San Francisco Zen Center, SF. Information 415.383.3134.

Buddhism at the Millennium’s Edge series sponsored by SF Zen Center. Information (on any of the events below) 415.863.3133.

Friday, April 21, 7:30pm: “The Question of Emptiness,” lecture by Stephen Batchelor. Fee: $15. Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin (at Geary), SF.

Saturday, April 22, all day: “Negative Capability,” workshop led by Stephen Batchelor. Fee: $75. Green Gulch Farm, Highway 1, Marin County.
GBF Calendar
April 2000 San Francisco/Bay Area Events

Sunday Morning Sittings,
Sunday Morning Sittings, 10:30am: San Francisco Buddhist Center, 37 Bartlett St, between 21st & 22nd, one block west of Mission St.

April 2 Jim Wilson
Monthly Speaker

April 9 Discussion by Sangha members

April 16 Michael P. McManus

April 23 Discussion by Sangha members

April 30 Mark Marion

Michael P. McManus, former bodyguard/interpreter for General Colin Powell, was a Buddhist monk for four years with HH the Dalai Lama. He will speak on the Tibetan practice of “Tonglen.” He brings sixteen years of Buddhist practice and study. He is currently at Stanford, pursuing a PhD in Buddhist Psychology.

Mark Marion is a psychotherapist whose Buddhist practice is in the Vipassana tradition. He contributed a chapter about coping with multiple loss in the gay community for the book Gay and Lesbian Mental Health: A Sourcebook for Practitioners, and also wrote an article in Queer Dharma 2.

Wednesday, April 11, 7:30pm:
Steering Committee Meeting (open to all GBF participants), at the home of Larry White, SF. Information 415.626.8107.

Saturday, April 8, 3–6:30pm:
Preparation and serving of dinner for homeless families, Hamilton Family Center, SF. Information call Clint Seiter at 415.386.3088.

Sunday, April 23, 12pm: Newsletter Mailing Party, after GBF Sunday sitting, 37 Bartlett Street, SF.

Saturday, April 22, 9am—all day:
Seventh Annual GBF Hike to Chimney Rock.
Information 415.386.3088.

Saturday, April 29, 7pm: GBF Potluck Dinner at the home of Lee Robbins, SF.
Information 415.552.9800.

7th Annual GBF Hike to Chimney Rock
Come celebrate Earth Day and join us on a short but quite spectacular hike and picnic at Chimney Rock in Point Reyes National Park on Saturday, April 22. This has become a classic GBF spring outing, going on seven years now. If the timing is right (and sometimes it gets a little tricky predicting this), the hikers should be treated to one of the most vivid displays of wildflowers in northern California, with Drake’s Bay and the Pacific Ocean providing dramatic backgrounds. The Point Reyes lighthouse is close by, and we might make a side trip there as well. The hike is short, but the drive up, while beautiful, isn’t; be prepared for an all-day excursion. This will be a potluck picnic, so please bring a dish to share with others. We will be carpooling from the San Francisco Buddhist Center (37 Bartlett St) at 9am. Bring warm clothing (it gets windy up there), a blanket, and sun block. Rain cancels. For more information, call Clint Seiter at 415.386.3088.

GBF Homeless Project
If you are available to volunteer your time to the Hamilton Family Center on the second Saturday of any month, please contact Clint Seiter at 415.386.3088. GBF volunteers prepare a dinner, funded by GBF, for homeless families.

Your Thrift Store Donations Earn Money For GBF
GBF members can donate their quality cast-offs to the Community Thrift Store (CTS) and GBF will receive a quarterly check based on the volume of items sold. This is a great way to support our Sangha, and the community. Last year we received over $800 through members’ generosity. Bring your extra clothing and other items to CTS at 623 Valencia St between 10am and 5pm, any day of the week. The donation door is around the corner on Sycamore Alley (parallel to and between 17th and 18th) between Valencia and Mission. Tell the worker you are donating to GBF. Our ID number is 40. Information 415.861.4910.

GBF Website
www.gaybuddhist.org
Prelude to Silence

Three Breaths

(internal whisper)

Inhale: Divine Creation ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Inhale: Divine Healer ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Inhale: Divine Wisdom ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Inhale: Divine Earth ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Inhale: Divine Wind ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Inhale: Divine Fire ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Inhale: Divine Water ...
Exhale: ...in me, in you, in all.

Three Breaths
Silence

— Howard DePorte

How to Reach Us

GBF Sangha
Send correspondence and address changes to: GBF, 2215-R Market Street, PMB 456, San Francisco, California 94114. Send e-mail to <gbfsf@hotmail.com>. For 24-hour information on GBF activities or to leave a message: 415.974.9878.

GBF Newsletter
Send submissions to: Editor, GBF Newsletter, 2215-R Market Street, PMB 456, San Francisco, CA 94114. If possible, include a Mac disk in Word or as a text file along with your hardcopy. You may also send your submissions via e-mail with your documents attached to: <halburt@aol.com>. We do reserve the right to edit for clarity or brevity.