Constructing the Body Of the Buddha from a Single Leaf of Grass:
Mindfulness and Work
by Jeffrey Schneider

Jeffrey Schneider, the director of the San Francisco Zen Center’s facility on Page Street, has been practicing in the Zen tradition since 1978. He spoke to us on February 14th.

In early December of this year I was invited to go to the Austin, Texas Zen Center where a friend of mine is the priest, and they were having their first sesshin. Sesshin is a seven-day meditation intensive, and the December one ends on the day we celebrate the traditional anniversary of the Buddha’s enlightenment, so this is a big deal. I was invited to go down there to help them put together their first sesshin and to be the head cook, which actually turned out to be the only cook. But, in the Soto Zen tradition, work is a very intrinsic part of our practice. We don’t make a great deal of separation between work or our daily lives and our more formal meditation practice. So, in order to prepare for this job, although I have cooked for many sesshins, I decided to reread the Tenzo Kyokun. The Tenzo Kyokun was written by Dogen Zenji (Zen Master Dogen). Dogen Zenji was a Japanese monk who lived in the 13th century who traveled to China, studied there, and brought with him to Japan the Soto Zen tradition, from which I come. He wrote extensively on practice and Buddhism, and one of the things he wrote was called the Tenzo Kyokun, which means, Instructions for the Head Cook. The tenzo was the head cook. So I was invited to Austin to be the head cook, the tenzo. In order to prepare myself—it’s considered a teaching position, by the way, sort of the same as the head of the meditation hall—so in order to prepare myself, I reread the admonitions that Dogen had written for us almost 800 years ago.

And I found that they were so pertinent to all areas of my practice that I wanted to use this text to talk about what Dogen said. This is not about meditation per se; it’s about taking the mind of meditation, that we develop in our meditation, into the rest of our lives. So it’s very practical in some ways, for those of us— all of us, actually—who live in the world, and not just perhaps in a mountain monastery someplace. So I’m just going to pick out little things here and there from the text, read them to you, and give you my take on them.

He says, “Baoming Renyong said, ‘Use the property and possessions of the community as carefully as if they were your own eyes.’ The tenzo should handle all food he receives with respect, as if it were to be used in a meal for the Emperor. Cooked and uncooked food must be handled in the same manner.” I’m told, though I haven’t read it myself, that in the rule of St. Benedict, which is one of the earliest writings governing Christian monasticism, St. Benedict says that the pots and pans in the kitchen are to be handled with the same respect as the holy utensils on the altar which receives the body and the blood of Christ. And, you know, in our meal ritual, in the Zen tradition, we have a line in the chant that talks about
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the purity of the three wheels, of giver, receiver and gift. So the gift is that which intimately binds the giver and the receiver. Just as the perception is what binds the subject and the object. It's all one event. So when Dogen is talking about handling the teacups, the property of the community, he's talking about the essential oneness - that is not the word I want actually - connectedness that binds the object and subject through the act of perception. That's one way of looking at it. This is a way of looking at the world which allows the world to be subject, as opposed to being divided into the isolated subject relating to isolated objects. So there's a continuity in subject and object here as seen as points on the continuum rather than as separate entities or separate events. And this is what encourages us, this understanding, this way of looking at it, at the world and ourselves and our place in the world. This is what encourages us to practice gratitude and respect. These are the two essential parts of our practice, gratitude and respect, and they come together in a bow.

Further on in the text, Dogen Zenji writes, "Both day and night, allow all things to come into and reside within your mind. Allow your mind and all things to function together as a whole." Let's read that again: "Both day and night, allow all things to come into and reside within your mind. Allow your mind and all things to function together as a whole." So this is basically the same thing. What he's saying here is to allow, to let go, to get out of our own way, so we don't impede the world, and not impeding the world means, to the best of our ability, not to place our expectations, our demands, our interpretations on things, but to allow each thing, each person to be as it or he or she is, to acknowledge the essential continuity between self and other. He also says, "When making soup with ordinary greens [because these are the instructions for the head cook], do not be carried away by feelings of dislike for them [ordinary greens] nor regard them lightly; neither jump for joy simply because you have been given ingredients of superior quality to make a special dish. By the same token, do not indulge in a meal because of its particularly good taste. There is no reason to feel an aversion towards an ordinary one. Do not be negligent or careless just because the materials seem plain and hesitate to work more diligently with materials of a superior quality. Your attitude toward things should not be contingent on their quality. A person who is influenced by the quality of a thing, or who changes his speech or manner according to the appearance or position of the person he meets, is not a man working in the way."

So what he's talking about here is value, how we value things. In the world normally as we go through our lives, we value things, some of them somewhat more highly and some of them somewhat less highly. A diamond is more valuable I suppose than a lump of coal, or the president of the university is more valuable than a street person, something like that. But what he's inviting us to do here, what he says is that a person practicing the way is somebody who sees absolute value in each thing and in each person, and of course absolute value is the same as no value at all. If we place each thing on a footing of absolute value, each thing is treated equally. For a short time I studied formal Japanese tea ceremony, and what they tell you is that when you're making tea, sometimes you go in and out of the tearoom, and you carry things in and out of the tearoom. One of the things you carry is a large container that has the waste water in it. And it can be kind of heavy. Or you carry a small teacup. And the instructions are to carry each thing as though it weighed the same. So we give ourselves equally to each thing, to each person.

This is not so easy. It goes against everything we know and everything that is ingrained in us, but this is where meditation comes. In meditation, we're given the opportunity, if we choose to take it, to treat each thing as though it had absolute value - each thought, each emotion, each part of our body, and as we develop this minded meditation, as we carry it into our everyday lives, we are allowed, if we choose, to experiment with this. So the meditation hall, this room, we can think of as a laboratory. By extension, we can think of our lives as a laboratory. Meditation is not about something other than this body and this mind. It's about me; it's about you; it's about using the body and mind as an experiment to find out what works.
It's about developing a very scientific attitude, actually. So the experiment that Dogen Zensuji is suggesting here is to treat each person and each thing as having equal weight and equal value, and can do that. We can do that for a moment, we can do it for an hour, we can do it for a day, and see what happens. And if we don't like the results, we don't have to do it any more.

"Handle even a single leaf of green in such a way that it manifests the body of the Buddha." This in turn allows the Buddha to manifest through the leaf. This is the power which you cannot grasp with your rational mind. It operates freely according to the situation in a most natural way. At the same time, this power functions in our lives to clarify and settle activities and is beneficial to all living.

"Handle even a single leaf of green in such a way that it manifests the body of the Buddha." Some of you may know the story of the Buddha and Kashyapa. Kashyapa was one of the early disciples of the Buddha and it was to him that, at least in the Zen tradition, we say the dharma was handed on. He was the Buddha's immediate successor. This is a nice myth. And we have no idea what really happened, but the story is that the Buddha came in front of these monks to give his lecture and instead of saying anything, he picked up a flower and smiled. And in the congregation, Kashyapa smiled as well, and the Buddha knew that the dharma had been passed to Kashyapa. So this is what it is to pick up a single leaf of green and manifest the body of the Buddha. In some place else, I believe in Dogen, he says that we must be able to construct an 18 foot tall golden Buddha out of a single blade of grass. This is seeing the absolute value in everything, or if you prefer the absence of value, in anything. At any rate, we have the opportunity to play with the idea that everything is off the scale. What would happen? I heard someone talking the other night about her anguish about not being able to measure up, and I found myself wondering how she would feel if she just let go of the calibration. This is what constructing the body of the Buddha from a single leaf of grass is.

"Similarly, do not judge monks as deserving of respect or as being worthless." Let's just say people. "Do not judge people as deserving of respect or as being worthless. Nor pay attention to whether a person has been practicing for only a short time or for many years. Without knowing where to find our own stability, how are we to know where someone else would be most stable? If the standard with which we evaluate others is incorrect, we are likely to see their good points as bad, or vice versa. What a mistake to make! There may very well be differences between those who have been practicing over many years, and those who have just begun, or between those gifted with great intelligence and those not so gifted. Even so, all are treasures of the sangha. (The sangha is the community of practitioners.) Though someone may have made a mistake in the past, he may very well be correct in the context of things now. Who is to say whether someone is a fool or a sage?"

So when we judge each other, when we judge ourselves, we are applying this calibration again. We're denying ourselves and each other absolute value. The way I'm trying to operate now, I'm trying on the idea that everything I know is wrong, or at least severely limited. And when I do that, it helps to relieve my willingness to judge, and actually I really do believe that most of what I know is wrong. I had a conversation this morning before coming over here with a friend of mine, and we were talking about an incident that happened between us, that caused some friction. Her version of events and my version of events, of this two and half minute moment, were completely different. Maybe you guys know what I'm talking about. So if we both cling to our version of events, who's right? And when we do this, when we judge, when we cling to our own version of events, we cut off possibility, we cut off potentiality, we judge and limit. And this in itself is a species of murder, of killing. The first precept, as you perhaps know, is that a disciple of the Buddha does not kill. This does not just mean shooting people or taking a machete to people or stomping on butterflies. This also means cutting off, denying the potential in each of us, in ourselves and others. So a disciple of the Buddha does his or her best not to do that.

It also -- this sticking to one point, to one version of who we are or who other people are -- denies the basic insight of Buddhism, which is, you know, the Buddha said that one of the three marks of conditioned existence is that there is no abiding self to be found. So when we stick to the idea of who we are, this is sticking to the idea of the self as an unchanging essence. But actually, if you think about it, and if you experience it, it's the reality of our changing insubstantial nonfixed self which is our manumission, which is our freedom, which is our liberation. Only if we change, only if we constantly change, is transformation possible. And so some days we are a sage and some days we are a fool and it varies moment to moment. There is no there there that doesn't change. Gertrude Stein agrees.

Further on he says, "In all the many monasteries located on the various mountains I have visited in Sung China, the monks holding the respective offices worked in their capacity for one year at a time. They always maintained and exhibited the same attitude as the head of the community, applying that attitude appropriately to the time and circumstances." So of course what he's saying here is that even though these guys only held their positions for a short time, they held them with the weight and responsibility as the head of the community who had oversight over all things in the monastery. "The three aspects of this attitude are to see that working for the benefit of others benefits oneself, to understand that through making every effort for the prosperity of the community one revivifies one's own character, and to know that endeavoring to succeed and to surpass the patriarchs of past generations means to learn from their lives and to value their examples."

Now, these are three pretty important statements. The first two statements, and I'll read them again: "to see that working for the benefit of others benefits oneself, and to understand that through making every effort for the prosperity of the community one revivifies one's own character." So these first two are about the two poles of practice, cultivation on one hand and surrender on the other. We cultivate the person by working for the benefit of
Volunteers Needed

Those who attend the GBF Sunday morning meditation and dharma talk may not be aware of all the small (and, in some cases, not so small) tasks that must be performed to keep the sangha alive and thriving. GBF survives solely through the volunteer efforts of its members. At this moment, there are a number of important tasks for which GBF needs committed volunteers. These tasks include:

- recording team (to record the Sunday morning dharma talks)
- pot luck coordinator
- mailing party coordinator and tea
- newsletter lay-out team
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None of these tasks should involve any huge commitment in time, but they are all very important to help keep GBF an active and nurturing community. As the old adage goes, "you get what you give." If you are looking for a way in which you can connect on a deeper level with the GBF sangha, volunteering for one of these tasks is an excellent opportunity. Please consider it.

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other, and making every effort. So this is the pole of cultivation. We try to observe the precepts, we try not to lie, to practice right speech, to practice right action, not to hurt other people - this is cultivation, and cultivation we sometimes bring to our meditation.

We make some effort to sit somewhat still, we make some effort to be concentrated in our minds - we make some effort. So this is the cultivation side, and it is very important, one of the two balances of our practice. The other side, though, he addresses as well.

“To understand that through making every effort for the prosperity of the community one revitalizes one's own character.” Okay, so this is the side of practice which is surrender. Surrender is ... what I surrender when I work for the benefit of others is my own idea of small selfish self — unchanging, the greedy self, the greedy self, the self that lives in isolation and fear. When I work for the prosperity of the community, whatever the community is, whether it be a monastery in the mountains of Sung China, or this group, or whatever, my family, my city, my country, this is letting go, this is surrender, this realizing that that which is I is larger than my needs, my psychology, my very limited body and mind. This is the surrender part of practice. This is also very important.

The third thing he says, as the attitudes that one should develop and maintain, is "to know that endeavoring to succeed and to surpass the patriarchs of past generations means to learn from their lives and to value their examples." On some level, when we first read this it sounds both arrogant and strange. How do we surpass the enlightened masters of the past? Isn't enlightenment sort of an absolute? Can someone be more enlightened that somebody else? Maybe and maybe not, and it also sounds a little arrogant sometimes to think of surpassing the masters of the past, surpassing your teacher, surpassing Dogen Zenji, as a matter of fact. But I think what he's saying here actually is that the challenge, the way that we surpass those in the past, is by continually making it new, finding new ways to enact and to embody in our own lives the dharma, the teaching, and to provide dharma gates, entry ways, into practice for others. What worked in 13th century rural Japan may not work so well in 21st century urban San Francisco. So, the effort that he's calling on us to make here is to discover how constantly to renew the dharma, renew the expression of the dharma. The truth of the teaching is unchanging, but its expression is constantly changing. And this is the challenge that we're given here. So once again, we are challenged to be scientists and experimenters in the realm of liberation.

A little bit further on he says, "Be very clear about this. A fool sees himself as another, but a wise man sees others as himself. This is also echoed in a very important Zen teaching called 'The Song of the Jewel Mirror Samadhi,' which says, 'You are not it. It actually is you.' So, once again, he is encouraging us to experience the world as subject, by neither objectifying the self nor objectifying the others. Where do we begin? Where do we stop?

Always we have to ask this question. You know, one way of looking at this is to see ourselves - and this is an experimental thought, we can try it on and see what it does; we can discard it if it doesn't work - but one way to look at ourselves in this way is as a tidal wave of causes and conditions. We inherit all of our own past karma, all of our own choices. The Dhammapada, one of the early Buddhist scriptures, says, "All that we are is a result of what we have thought." Not only that, but 'all that we are' is always all that our parents have thought and enacted, and their parents, and our cultures, all the way back to Mother Eve. So we inherit not only our personal karma - inherit is the wrong word - we consist of not only our personal karma, but our familial karma, our cultural karma, and anybody who has traveled abroad knows how culturally conditioned we are. You go to a different country, and people act differently there. You come from a different country, and people act differently here. We are very conditioned. So the challenge of our practice is to see this. It's swimming upstream against the tsunami of our past karma, and we try to practice in this moment.

One of the ways we do it is to observe very closely what's going on here. What's the difference? What's the connection? For example, the words I
am speaking and the words you are hearing. Where do they come from? We could say that they start in my mind, whatever that is. Thinking makes chemical changes in my brain. The neurons fire to make the mouth and the tongue move. The breath comes out, the sound comes out, and as the sound comes out, it goes through the air, it reaches your ears, your ear drums vibrate, and it makes changes in your body. My words make changes in your body. My words make changes in your mind. Where is the word? Where is the sound? Is it here? Is it there? Is it in your mind? It fills the whole space here. And it becomes part of you. So we're bound together here as closely as lovers. The sangha. The sangha is also an erotic community. So we're looking constantly at questions of boundaries, of how to expand the sense of Self. Big Self. Big Mind. And it's when we surrender our small self to the reality of this interconnectedness that our practice grants us freedom and liberation.

Actually, "when working in any position of responsibility, not only as zenjo (head cook), but as any other officer or assistant, try to maintain a spirit of joy, magnanimity, along with a caring attitude of a parent." So Dogen Zenji says that there are three minds that go along with being tenzo, or that go along with being an accountant, or a cab driver or anything: joyful mind, magnanimous mind, and parental mind. "A joyful spirit is one of gratefulness and buoyancy. You should consider this carefully. If you had been born into some heavenly realm, you would most likely have only become attached to the pleasures of that realm, taking neither time nor opportunity to awaken the bodhi, nor would you be likely to feel any particular necessity for practicing." So, he talks about joyful spirit or joyful mind as intimately connected with gratitude. And gratitude is intimately connected with our ability to work. Perhaps some of you know that in Buddhism we talk about the six realms into which beings are born -- the realm of the gods, the realm of the fighting spirits, the human realm, the animal realm, the hungry ghost realm, and the hell realm. They all have various characteristics. The human realm is characterized by two things, by work and by the capacity for enlightenment. It's only in the human realm that beings experience enlightenment. So our work and our gratitude and our joy are all intimately connected. Work is how we actualize our liberation from the small self, and he says, "Therefore, rejoice in your birth into the world, where you are capable of using your body freely to offer food to the Buddha, the dharma and the sangha. Considering the innumerable possibilities in a timeless universe, we have been given a marvelous opportunity. The merit of working as a tenzo -- or a cab driver, or a teacher or an accountant -- will never decay. My sincerest desire is that you exhaust all the strength and effort of all your lives, past, present and future, and every moment of every day, into your practice through the work of the tenzo, view all things with this attitude called 'joyful mind.'"

So when he's talking about exhausting ourselves, what he means, I believe, is bringing to this moment, bringing everything we do into the work we do at this moment with a sense of joy and gratitude for this body and this mind which can do work, gratitude for the opportunity to offer it, and he says offer it to the three treasures, the Buddha, the dharma and the sangha, but we always can have this attitude if we want. When I think about work, when I was actually thinking about this lecture, I was thinking about work and the work I do and it occurred to me that we don't really earn anything, no matter how much we work. Everything that comes to me comes to me as a gift, and my work and what comes to me are actually quite separate. So we receive everything from the universe as a gift and this ability to work, by the way, exemplifies the moment of choice in the karmic mix, so we are not just creatures defined by our past but the element of free will enters into it as well.

"Roshin" -- Japanese word -- "is the mind or attitude of a parent. In the same way that a parent cares for an only child, keep the three treasures in your mind. A parent, irrespective of poverty or difficult circumstances, loves and raises a child with care. How deep is love like this? Only a parent can understand it." So he's talking about the mind of a parent, the parental mind on one side, and that's the loving and nurturing side that takes care of the
child at all costs. There's another side that he doesn't touch on that I'd like to bring up, and that's the parent as loving but stern teacher. Sometimes we need to be this - I need to be this - to myself. For example, if we have made a decision with ourselves - I'll use this as an example - to get up every morning and meditate, when we hear the alarm go off and we just get up without asking whether we particularly feel like it on that particular day, that's when we're being parents to ourselves - stern and loving parents. Because getting up in the morning when the alarm goes off, without deciding whether we want to or not on that particular day, allows us to practice beyond the limits of personality, preference and psychology. So we allow ourselves to practice without either like or dislike entering into it. And this is what Dogen Zenji in another place calls “dropping away body and mind,” which he says is liberation. So when we practice beyond the limits of our personality and our preferences and our particular individual psychology, that's dropping away body and mind. That's liberation.

And we can try this on any time we like. It's easiest to try on in meditation, but you can try it on at any time in the day. So I can ask myself, how would it be if for just one hour, five minutes, I did not let myself be controlled by personality or preference? And this is the way that we are loving parents to ourselves, guiding ourselves to maturity and autonomy. Our spiritual advisors are ideally like this as well. They are guiding us to the place where, as Dogen Zenji says, in another writing of his, "your treasure store will open of itself and you will use it at will." So this is the function of discipline in our lives - the parental mind.

The magnanimous mind is next. "Magnanimous mind is like a mountain - stable and impartial. Exemplifying the ocean, it is tolerant and views everything from the broadest perspective. Having a magnanimous mind means being without prejudice and refusing to take sides. When carrying something that weighs an ounce, do not think of it as light, and likewise when you have to carry fifty pounds, do not think of it as heavy. Do not get carried away by the sounds of spring, nor become heavy hearted upon seeing the colors of fall. View the changes of the season as a whole, and weigh the relativeness of light and heavy from a broad perspective. It is then that you should write, study and understand the character for magnanimous." So magnanimous mind allows each person and thing and situation to develop in its own way. It's not trying to force the seed. It's patient mind. Suzuki Roshi who founded the Zen Center where I practice said, "To control your harsher cow, give it a large pasture." So this is magnanimous mind, to be patient, and particularly most of us need to be most patient with ourselves. And he says not to be carried away by the colors of spring or become heavy-hearted when the fall comes.

Part of what this means is that sometimes we're praised, sometimes we're criticized, and the inner balance comes from knowing that these are like the seasons. Our good luck or our bad luck, our health or our ill health, the approbations of others or their censure, viewing all of these with magnanimous mind which is patient allows them to come and go. The Diamond Sutra, which is an important early Mahayana teaching, talks about the patient acceptance of those dharmas which fail to be produced. And the dharmas in this case are the state of mind or constituents of reality. And actually all dharmas fail to be produced. Those states of mind we most wish for sometimes fail to be produced. I mean, sometimes I'll go to the meditation hall in the morning, and those wonderful states of mind - compassion, rest, ease, joy, magnanimity, patience - are completely absent and what I get is irritation, anger, sleepiness, and these too are the states of mind which are produced and which must be met with patience and ease. So all dharmas, all states of mind, all constituent bits of reality come and go. The Heart Sutra says that they neither appear nor disappear, and this is actually how we experience the world, odd though it may sound.

So magnanimity, patience, comes from a clear insight into the empty luminous nature of all things which we can experience primarily through meditation.

I'll read the last paragraph, "Be very clear about this. All the great teachers down through the ages have learned the meaning of magnanimity not merely from writing the character for it, but through the various events and circumstances of their lives, even though we can clearly hear their voices expounding the most fundamental truths and the ramifications of these truths for our lives. They were men whose eyes were open to what is most vital in a life of practice, enabling us to have contact with the Buddha. Their very lives manifested the sole purpose of the true Self. Whether you are the head of the temple, a senior monk or other officer, or simply an ordinary monk, do not forget the attitude behind living out your life with joy, having the deep concern of the parent, and carrying out all of your activities with magnanimity."

If anything I have said today has been useful or interesting, please accept it as your own. Anything that has been confusing or disturbing, please forgive me. Take what you need and leave the rest. ♦

Editor's note: The passage in the Rule of St. Benedict to which Jeffrey refers is chapter 31, verses 10 and 11, in the instructions to the cellarer (the monk in charge of the monastery's property): "He will regard all utensils and goods of the monastery as sacred vessels of the altar, aware that nothing is to be neglected." RB 1980: The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and English with Notes, edited by Timothy Fry, OSB, et alii. Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press, 1981.
GBF Calendar
San Francisco/Bay Area Events

Regular Sittings are held every Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. at the San Francisco Buddhist Center, 37 Bartlett Street, San Francisco, CA.

The June GBF speakers are as follows:
June 3: Jim Wilson
June 10: Cathleen Williams
June 17: Roger Corless
June 24: Open discussion

1Cathleen Williams has been practicing at the San Francisco Zen Center for 22 years. Four years ago, she retired from her job as a psychiatric social worker to do priest practice full time. She has experience with Vipassana and Tibetan practice as well as Soto Zen. Currently she is Ino at City Center (the person in charge of the zendo and ceremonies).

2Roger Corless, a longtime member of GBF, has recently moved to the Bay area upon his retirement from Duke University, where he had endeavored to teach Buddhism to pre-med basketball fans for thirty years. In this talk, entitled "Healing Internalized Homophobia: A Queer Reading of the Lotus Sutra," he will suggest a way of using the parable of the Lost Heir in chapter 4 of the Lotus Sutra to heal our internalized self-hatred and homophobia.

Next Steering Committee Meeting.
June 14, 2001, 7:30 p.m., at the home of Lee Robbins, 4433 17th Street, San Francisco. For more information, call 415-552-9800.

East Bay Sitting.
1st & 3rd Thursday of each month, 7:30-9:00. Half-hour sitting followed by tea and discussion. For more information, call 510-649-1697.

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.

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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. So far this year we have 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 Needs Volunteer Hosts
GBF needs you to contribute your services to the Sangha as a Host for Sunday morning sittings. Sign up to help provide a hospitable setting for our members to come together. Call Justin Hecht for information: 415.673.0283.

GBF Website
www.gaybuddhist.org

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 non-Gay practitioners. For more information, contact Bob Hass, 707.938.8868.

GBF Homeless Project
If you are able 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.
By the power and truth of this practice, 
may all beings have happiness 
and the causes of happiness, 
may all be free from sorrow 
and the causes of sorrow, 
may all never be separated from the 
sacred happiness 
which is without sorrow, 
and may all live in equanimity, 
without too much attachment 
or too much aversion, 
and live believing in the equality 
of all that lives.

—GBF Dedication of Merit