



Gay Buddhist Fellowship

SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

Clarity and Love

BY EVE DECKER

Eve Decker began practicing *Vipassana* meditation in 1991. She has been teaching dharma since 2006. She has released two CDs of original, dharma based music. She leads groups on “Metta for Self” and a monthly “Sit and Sing Sangha” in her hometown of Berkeley. She is a graduate of the Path of Engagement and Community Dharma Leader training programs at Spirit Rock Center in California.

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 San Francisco Bay Area, the United States, and the world. GBE's mission includes cultivating a social environment that is inclusive and caring.

SO, IT'S A TOTAL HONOR TO BE HERE; TO BE WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE. I was thinking about a quote from the Buddha. He said that we all suffer and there are basically two ways to respond to suffering. One is with bewilderment. We can spend many lifetimes in bewilderment, unfortunately. And the other way that we can respond to suffering is by seeking an end to suffering. So just the very fact that we're all here means that we're all seekers, and that's really a blessing. I know from my own life and my practice that states that cause suffering, like doubt—self-doubt, or doubt in the possibility of freedom; aversion, irritation, annoyance, hatred, fear, craving, confusion—these states are self-perpetuating. They are really difficult to get any perspective on, let alone make a different choice about, let alone set a whole different habit pattern in place such that I'm not going into these suffering-inducing states. But what's so wonderful is that, because we are seekers, we're finding that it is possible—not easy, but possible—to really make choices so that our suffering is lessened. Not only our own suffering, but the suffering of people around us with whom we are interacting as well, because to whatever extent we have found ways to respond to the moment with wisdom and kindness, we're tending to our own hearts and to everybody around us. And that's what the Buddha taught.

So, I'm assuming that many if not all of us know the basic story of the Buddha's childhood and what happened to him. He was a prince and was in great indulgent wealth for that time. He saw something in the world outside of the castle and went on a quest of many years trying to find freedom from suffering by torturing the body, which was one of the ways that people thought you might find freedom—sometimes still do. And then he had a memory. This was before he sat under the Bodhi tree. He remembered being a child—a prince in the castle grounds. He was sitting under a cherry tree, feeling at ease, feeling comfortable, feeling loved and peaceful. And he had this piercing childlike clarity where there was no past, no future; there was just himself and the cherry blossoms. It was a moment of complete freedom. It

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was some kind of place of kindness and clear attention. So he had that insight and shortly thereafter he became awakened.

When he teaches awakening or freedom from suffering, he teaches that there are two wings. We need that kindness, we need love—the first wing, more traditionally called compassion. That in itself is sometimes missing. We need kindness and love, in each moment. But love and kindness without clarity can get infused with delusion. So, let’s say I’m going for love and kindness, which for me is looking like six hours on Facebook. It’s infused with delusion because I don’t have the clarity to see that sloth is a form of stepping away from the moment which is aversion, and brings pain. We need love, but we also need wisdom—the second wing. We need clarity—clear attention. In the Buddhist tradition, wisdom and insight are synonymous, and the way that we get insight is by inhabiting the only moment that really ever is, which is *this* moment. We need knowledge and study, and those are forms of insight as well. But forget getting lost in one’s head in rumination. We need clarity. So, in that moment as a child under the cherry tree, he had clarity, he was fully present in the moment, he had love, and he was free. And so the challenge that we have as seekers for freedom from suffering, which is where we all are, is to inhabit the moment, and infuse it with love.

The Buddha taught the *Brahma Viharas*—the divine abodes of the heart. There are four ways when we meet a moment to infuse it with love, depending on what’s happening. Here we are: we drop in, feel the body, feel the butt on the chair or the cushion, and sense into what’s happening. If what’s happening is kind of in the neutral land of OK, not super amazing; not horrible; just regular neutral land, then we bring loving-kindness to it—kind attention, curiosity, awareness. This is the first form of love. If there’s any suffering in the moment, which there quite often is, then we bring compassion to it. It’s the second of these four forms of love. Love meeting suffering is a courageous act! If what we’re meeting is wonderful for someone outside of ourselves—their joy at a baby being born or a home being purchased—we bring appreciative joy to that. Hurray, something good is happening! Or if the goodness is in our own lives, appreciative joy looks like gratitude. Hurray, something good is happening! Appreciative joy and gratitude are the third forms of love. Then the fourth *Brahma Vihara* is taking all of this love and holding it with that wisdom, knowledge and insight that everything changes. The neutral changes; the difficult changes; the good things change. Equanimity is accepting that we live in imperma-

nence and abiding in calm as we observe this moment coming and going. These are all ways to meet the moment with love.

In my own childhood, I had both the kind of experience the Buddha had of the present moment clarity and love, and I also had suffering, as we probably all did. For me the clarity and love came in the form of my mother singing me and my four siblings to sleep each night with lullabies. The suffering was that I grew up in an alcoholic family, and as you probably know, that is a whole collection of difficult experiences for children. So I took those two things, that suffering with which I came up into the world, and that peace and freedom that came from hearing my mother sing to me at night, and I became a young seeker. After trying on a lot of things I landed with Buddhism. For me, music is a really wonderful way to practice the refuges of love and clarity, so that’s how I like to share dharma. So, what you have in front of you are packets or little song sheets that were made for a class I teach called Metta for Self. I use these songs in these classes that I teach.

There are different kinds of ways that we can be stuck in that bewilderment of delusion, and one of the ways that is really epidemic in our culture is to be stuck in the bewilderment of delusion that we’re not good enough. Now not all of us have that. It’s not ubiquitous, but it’s very common. In 2003 a bunch of western Buddhist teachers were meeting with the Dalai Lama to talk about emotion, and Sharon Salzberg, a *Vipassana* teacher on the East Coast, brought up the issue of low self-esteem in western culture. The Dalai Lama was very confused by the concept and had to spend quite a bit of time with his translator. A wonderful book called *Healing Emotions* by Daniel Goleman tells that whole story in detail. It’s actually quite an interesting book. In one short description after that moment, Daniel Goleman says, “The Dalai Lama is astounded to hear that many westerners suffer from feelings of low self-esteem. There is no such concept of self-loathing or self-depreciation, or as the Dalai Lama puts it, a lack of compassion for oneself or self-directed contempt in Tibetan culture.” Doesn’t exist—can you imagine? For us, it does exist. And we could have a very interesting discussion about why, but for now, just to say, yes it exists. What’s the source?

Kristin Neff, who has a whole body of work around self-compassion, has questioned and studied why we don’t step out of that at some point; why we allow our minds to say unkind things to ourselves. And she says, “The number one reason people give for why they aren’t more compassionate

toward themselves is fear of laziness and self-indulgence.” Spare the rod, spoil the child. What she goes on to say and other studies are showing is that we’re more motivated by confidence, and that actually self-recrimination cripples us; brings us down. So that’s a delusion. Aversion in all of its forms is a delusion. Boundaries are part of compassion. We can have boundaries, and with clarity we move forward with self-love, not with self-hatred. So I teach about how to step out of that and I use these songs to help. The first song is called *I Have Arrived*. One of the ways to free ourselves from the tyranny of self-criticism is to use our mindfulness to drop into the present moment; to step away from the stories in our minds and feel into the body and the breath. Thich Nhat Hanh called the teaching of *I Have Arrived* the shortest dharma talk he ever gave. If we could just remember more often that this moment now is the only place where we’re ever alive; this moment now is the only place where we have agency to make choices about how we respond. Clarity and love are the wise choices in this moment. Now, can we bring clarity; can we bring kindness? So let’s sing:

*I have arrived, I am home, in the here and in the now
I have arrived, I am home, in the here and in the now
I am solid, I am free, I am solid, I am free
In the ultimate I dwell, in the ultimate I dwell*

Sometimes people ask me about the word “solid” in this teaching, because in Buddhism we learn about groundlessness and no self. What do you think Thich Nhat Hanh meant when he said I am solid? I don’t know what he meant, but when we drop into the present and feel our bodies, one of the things that is always with us, like the breath, is the body’s relationship with the Earth. I love so much that the Earth holds us to itself with gravity that comes right out of the heart of Earth. I know we can make that scientific and intellectual, but to me that’s magic. We are made of the same elements as Earth, and with mindfulness, we can feel how we’re always connected to Earth. So, when Thich Nhat Hanh says, “I am solid,” in my practice I take that to mean that, with mindfulness, I can feel that I am grounded. It’s a reminder of our interconnection, and to not be so afraid. So it is with the breath—another way we’re always interconnected with our environment. We’re being kept alive by this invisible air.

There are these five hindrances to practice and they’re not just hindrances to meditation practice, they’re also hindrances in daily life to these wonderful qualities of freedom:

love and clarity. The first hindrance is craving, which is the mind’s delusion that happiness will come from something that is impermanent. The second hindrance is aversion or hatred, of which fear and irritation are also expressions. The third is sloth and torpor—the way that the mind can sink in order to retreat from the present. Then there’s the fourth, restlessness and worry, and finally the fifth, doubt. Each of these five hindrances has antidotes. So with craving, we’re imagining that something outside of ourselves is going to bring us happiness and then that energy of reaching forward increases our suffering. We lose our mindfulness and our kindness as we reach for this thing outside of ourselves. The antidote for craving is remembering impermanence. Nothing outside of ourselves will bring us lasting happiness. Then we can let go and come back to where we do find lasting happiness. We find it in cultivating peace. The antidote to aversion is loving-kindness; the antidote to sloth and torpor is, again, remembering impermanence—our own impermanence, and focusing on our deepest intentions. What do we wish for in this very short life? With restlessness and worry, the antidote is to come back to the breath. It calms the mind to come back into the present and visit this friend, this relationship that we have with air—our body and the air doing their thing. And the antidote to doubt—whether it’s self-doubt, doubt in one’s own journey, or doubt in Buddhism—is investigation. Investigation can look like bringing curiosity into the present moment, or if it’s doubt about something else, bringing study, asking questions, reading texts. That’s the antidote to doubt. It’s a wonderful practice. So, this is another teaching from Thich Nhat Hanh, the song called *Breath*. This is the antidote to restlessness and worry:

*In breath, out breath, deep breath, slow breath
Calm breath, ease breath, smile breath, release breath
Present moment, wonderful moment*

One of the antidotes to all of these hindrances is coming back to our deepest intention. Intention is incredibly powerful. We hear about karma in Buddhism. One translation of the word karma is intention. Because this moment that we’re in right now is the only moment that is—the rest is thought—this is the place, right now, where we create the karma for what is to come. This moment is also the result of the karma of what came before. So cause and effect brings us to this moment, and kindness and understanding can help us see that it could not be

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other than it is. What I'm saying right now is dogma. You don't need to believe it at all. Just investigate it for yourself and see what you think. This idea of intention can help us see that we are here in this moment, and we can choose to plant the seeds, or incline towards peace, kindness, well-being, patience, generosity, forgiveness, gratitude. Or we can have the habit patterns that we are all infused with of aversion, craving, distraction, delusion. This is the moment where we make that choice, and that choice is about intention. So, it's interesting to think about karma and intention being synonymous.

Now we'll sing *Instrument of Peace*. Gil Fronsdal, one of my teachers who is down in Redwood City, has a very beautiful analogy about how intention can impact our lives. There are two parallel lines running off into infinity, and ne'er the twain shall meet. But with some intention, we can nudge one line a tiny bit. May I practice more patience; may I make sure I get my "tush on the cushion" most days; may I work with my speech so that I'm more kind in my communications. A simple thing that in the short run may not look like it's making any difference, but over time takes that line and changes its direction and can radically change our lives. So something that in a month or two looks like it's making no difference, five years from now may have transformed our lives, and all because of this intention toward love and clarity. So this is a wonderful excerpt from St. Francis:

May I be an instrument of peace, May I be an instrument of peace

I love singing with you. It makes me know that we're friends. When we sing together I feel the connection. Thank you.

I'm going to read you a really beautiful quote from the Buddha. This one is not on my wall yet, but I want to have it done in calligraphy and framed to put on my wall. "It is in this way that we must train ourselves: by liberation of the self through love, we will develop love, we will practice it, we will make it both a way and a basis, take a stand upon it, store it up, and thoroughly set it going." So, just imagine with me that we can have boundaries with love, we can have self-discipline with love, we can have communication with love, we can have self-talk with love, we can have the soles of our feet on the pavement of the sidewalk with love. Anytime love is lacking, we're lost. And it's OK to be lost. We can hold ourselves in kindness when we're lost, but we can return to that north star of love in everything we do, including loving ourselves and each other when we're lost.

So we have the next song, *May We*, which is a musical version of the loving-kindness phrases: may we be safe, may we be happy or peaceful, may we be healthy, may we live with ease. It's interesting because the Buddha introduced loving-kindness to his monastic followers as an anti-

dote to fear. There was a group of monks who were afraid to go meditate in a forest that they noticed was filled with scary tree spirits, and they didn't want to go in there. So the Buddha said, "Just practice loving-kindness, open your heart, and if you can't do it, just by intending the heart to open, then say some words that will help you open the heart and go in that forest." So they did, and the tree spirits loved it and mellowed out and supported the monks' practice. But loving-kindness phrases are not positive affirmations. For example, with the phrase, "May I be safe," it's not meant to create all the circumstances external to us such that we're safe. Really what these phrases are meant to do is simply to open the heart; to allow us to feel our love. They're giving some kind of structure so that we can *feel* our love. So when we say the phrases, it's taught to begin where we feel our love most easily. And for the Buddha and for some cultures, that's with ourselves. Not for me. For me, I had to struggle a long time before I could offer love to myself like that. For me, the place where it's easiest to open my heart as I say these phrases and really feel the love is for my dog. But, ultimately, we want to be able to open our hearts and feel that love for our dog, for our loved ones, for ourselves, and for our difficult people. Can you imagine feeling that love for our difficult people? But the Buddha taught that it's possible.

Sharon Salzberg has a really great story. She was in a rickshaw with a woman friend in India, and a big dude pulled her out of the rickshaw and was pulling her off through the crowd in a scary way. She got away, but just by the skin of her teeth, and it was very frightening. She got to her teacher and said, "Alright, so I'm being taught to move through the world in love and this very frightening thing happened. What would your advice have been for me?" The teacher responded, "With all the loving-kindness in your heart that you could possibly invoke, hit the man over the head with your umbrella!" She's actually in that moment not only having loving-kindness for herself, but for the scary dude, too. Talk about planting seeds! It's terrible for him to act out violence like that. So, yes, loving-kindness and opening our hearts, but still having that clarity of wisdom about how to act appropriately and have discernment.

May I (you, we) be safe and protected from inner and outer harm

May I (you, we) be truly happy, and deeply peaceful

May I (you, we) be healthy and strong, and physically at ease

May I (you, we) take care of myself (yourself, ourselves), and live with well-being

With that intention, this is a lovely place to end. ■

INSIDE OUT

Words and Works from our Spiritual Friends in Confinement

The Moth

BY JOSEPH STANWICK

Solitary confinement is a misleading description of my cell because for the last twenty years it has been everything but solitary confinement. Indeed the truth of the matter is that from the moment the steel door slammed shut behind me and the bolts were slid home, I have never for an instant been truly alone. Multitudes of tiny souls engaged in the business of life come and go day and night. Ants, spiders, millipedes and mice, crickets, June bugs and more besides have hopped, slithered, flown, or walked into my cell to keep me company for a spell.

One slow and empty afternoon a little moth came to visit. It was a dusty looking short and plump bug the color of sun-bleached driftwood. It had two perfectly round black dots for eyes and a head full of curiosities and it flew about in a slow and easy flap, examining the meager contents of my cell one by one. The little moth touched down as lightly as a feather onto books, blanket, cup, and me in turn just long enough to appease its inquiring mind before flying off to some other riddle such as toilet, sink, bar of soap, or scratched up tin mirror affixed to the cell wall. It was in constant motion driven on by its thirst for knowledge and thrill of discovery, I suppose. There was not one item inside the cell that it did not eagerly and fully inspect and I watched it all entertained and enthralled from my bed. I didn't know what path my little visitor had taken to get into the cell, but when it grew tired of its explorations and sought a way out, it hurled itself up against the half inch thick window pane embedded into the steel door over and over again, from top to bottom and side to side, seeking an exit that wasn't there.

I too have hurled myself up against that fat square of glass many times in the passing of years, pounding out angers and frustrations of failed hopes. I took comfort in the little moth's presence and its industrious ways and didn't want it to leave, but after five minutes or so of watching its efforts come to naught, I got up from my bed to render aid. Catching the moth gently, I carried it down to the bottom of the door where a stiff breeze was blowing in and sat it on the floor. I gave it a soft nudge towards freedom but it didn't budge one wee step—it just stood there in that unrelenting blast of air thinking things over, I suppose. But it didn't back away either, which was an encouraging sign, so I nudged it once again as softly as a kitten's mew and that got things moving. The little moth tucked its chin down onto its chest and bravely walked forward. Although it was only a few inches away from the thin strip of light and gush of air rolling in beneath the door, it seemed like a mile to me, and for one dreadfully long moment I thought my little pal might get blown head over heels backwards and I held my breath! A second later it was gone, and so too was the slow and empty afternoon inside my solitary confinement cell. ■

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Sunday Sittings

10:30 am to 12 noon

Every Sunday at 10:30am we meditate together for 30 minutes, followed by a talk or discussion till 12pm. Everyone is then welcome to stay and socialize over refreshments till approximately 12:30pm, after which those who are interested usually go somewhere local for lunch. Our sittings are held at the San Francisco Buddhist Center, 37 Bartlett Street (Look for the red door near 21st St between Mission and Valencia Streets)

MUNI: 14 Mission or 49 Van Ness-Mission, alight at 21st St, walk 1/2 block

BART: 24th and Mission, walk 3 1/2 blocks

PARKING: on street (meters free on Sundays) or in adjacent New Mission Bartlett Garage. The Center is handicapped accessible.

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. 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.

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There is now a GBF discussion group for the general membership (and others) on Yahoo. Join the discussion at:

www.groups.yahoo.com/group/gaybuddhistfellowship

The Gay Buddhist Fellowship is a charitable organization pursuant to Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) and California Revenue and Taxation Code #23701d.

Calendar

Sunday Speakers

March 6 Prasadachitta Dharmachari

As an ordained member of the Triratna Buddhist Community, Prasadachitta teaches meditation, yoga and Buddhism at the San Francisco Buddhist Center. His practice and teaching grows out of a valuing of friendship and community. He is interested in the link between ideal qualities, such as love and clarity, as inspiring guides, and those same qualities as they manifest “imperfectly” in everyday relationships.

March 13 Padmatara

Padmatara is a member of the Triratna Buddhist Order and the Center Director of the San Francisco Buddhist Center. She began meditating in 1989, in an effort to give up smoking, and it worked, eventually. She now teaches meditation and Buddhism and leads retreats at the SFBC and other Triratna Centers. She's currently particularly interested in using communication and improvisation to deepen practice, and is training in Focusing—a mindful self-therapy based on cultivating kind awareness towards all our experience.

March 20 Jennifer Berezan

Jennifer Berezan is a unique blend of singer/songwriter, teacher, and activist. Over the course of ten albums, she has developed and explored recurring themes with a rare wisdom. Her lifelong involvement in environmental, women's, and other justice movements as well as an interest in Buddhism and earth-based spirituality are at the heart of her writing. She teaches at the California Institute of Integral Studies in the department of Philosophy and Religion. Her on-going class (since 1997) is entitled “*The Healing Ecstasy of Sound*” and explores music as a spiritual practice from a wide range of cross cultural, traditional and contemporary perspectives.

March 27 Open Discussion

April 3 Susan Moon

Susan Moon is a writer, editor, and lay teacher in the Soto Zen tradition. She leads Buddhist retreats and teaches writing workshops in the U.S. and abroad. Her books include *This Is Getting Old: Zen Thoughts on Aging with Humor and Dignity*, *The Hidden Lamp: Stories from 25 Centuries of Awakened Women*, with co-editor Florence Caplow, and most recently, *What Is Zen? Plain Talk for a Beginner's Mind*, with Zoketsu Norman Fischer.

April 10 David Lewis

David Lewis has been following the dharma path for over 40 years and has a degree in comparative religious studies. He started out in the Tibetan Shambhala tradition and has been practicing vipassana meditation since moving to San Francisco over 25 years ago. For the past 7 years he has been practicing intensively. David is a member of the Mission Dharma sangha, where he teaches an introduction to insight meditation class. A long time member of the Gay Buddhist Fellowship, he also leads a weekly sitting group for seniors every Friday morning. David is a graduate of Spirit Rock Meditation Center's Dedicated Practitioners Program and has been on the teaching team for Spirit Rock retreats.

April 17 Jana Drakka

“Gengetsu Junsei” received Dharma Transmission in the Soto Zen Buddhist Lineage from Zenkei Blanche Hartman. Jana's nonprofit organization, Jana Drakka Community Services, provides a wide range of services including support groups, workshops, classes and talks. Jana's community work is based in

Harm Reduction Principles—a way to meet everyone with complete acceptance—and allows for a client-centered modality. For details and contact info visit www.janadrakka.com.

April 24 Jon Bernie

Jon Bernie is a contemporary spiritual teacher focused on the unfolding of natural wakefulness—the already enlightened basic state that lies at the core of human experience. He has four decades of practice and study in the contemplative traditions of Soto Zen, Theravada Insight Meditation & Advaita Vedanta. In addition to his work as a spiritual teacher, Jon is also an experienced healer and teacher of somatic embodiment. He has been in private practice since 1981. Jon leads classes, intensives and retreats in the San Francisco Bay Area and nationally.

May 1 Dorothy Hunt

Dorothy Hunt serves as the Spiritual Director of Moon Mountain Sangha, teaching at the request of Adyashanti. She has practiced psychotherapy since 1967 and is the founder of the San Francisco Center for Meditation and Psychotherapy. Self-inquiry, as taught by Ramana Maharshi, led to the first of a series of awakenings. Dorothy is the author of *Only This! and Leaves from Moon Mountain*, a contributing author to *The Sacred Mirror, Listening from the Heart of Silence*, and the on-line journal *Undivided*. Dorothy offers satsang, retreats, and private meetings in the Bay area and elsewhere by invitation. For more information, please visit www.dorothyhunt.org.

May 8 Martha Boesing

In three decades of Buddhist practice and teaching, Martha Boesing has received lay ordination at Clouds in Water Zen Center in St. Paul, MN, taken refuge with Pema Chodron at Gampo Abbey, and continued studies with Pema at the Shambhala Center in Berkeley, CA. Having spent her professional life as a theater artist, she has written over forty produced plays, and led workshops and directed plays for theaters throughout the country. Currently she is performing and teaching at the Faithful Fools Street Ministry in the Tenderloin of San Francisco. Martha is a member of the 350Bay Area speakers bureau.

May 15 Charles Garfield

Charles Garfield, PhD, is Founder of Shanti; founding faculty at Metta Institute End of Life Counseling Program; Research Scholar at the the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley; and a mathematician on the Apollo Eleven first lunar landing program. Dr. Garfield is a Clinical Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychiatry, University of California Medical School, and a faculty member at the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. He has published ten books including *Sometimes My Heart Goes Numb: Love and Caregiving in a Time of AIDS*; *Psychosocial Care of the Dying Patient*; and *Stress and Survival: The Emotional Realities of Life Threatening Illness*.

May 22 Heather Sundberg

Heather Sundberg began teaching meditation in 1999. She has completed the four-year Spirit Rock's Insight Meditation Society Teacher Training. Beginning her own meditation practice in her late teens, for twenty years+ Heather has studied with senior teachers in the Insight Meditation and Tibetan traditions, and has sat 1-3 months of retreat a year for the last fifteen+ years. She is a Teacher for Mountain Stream Meditation Center in the Sierra Foothills, and also teaches classes, daylongs and retreats nationally, especially at Spirit Rock Meditation Center. For more info, visit www.heathersundberg.com.

May 29 Open Discussion

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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, believing in the equality of all that lives.

—GBF Dedication of Merit